

# **American History: A Survey**

**Volume I: To 1877**

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***New pictorial essays on "The Course of American Art"  
by Gerald Bernstein, Brandeis University***

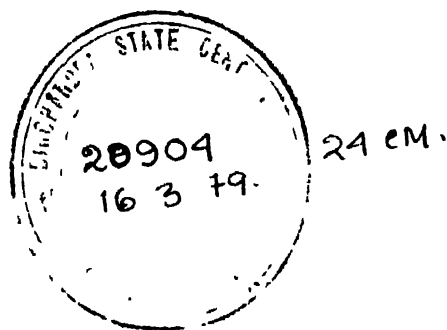


**Fourth Edition**

# **American History**

**A Survey**

**Volume I: To 1877**



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# **To the Memory of William Best Hesseltine**

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# Preface

*Editor's note: In order to provide an alternative format for those who find it inconvenient to use the one-volume hardcover edition of American History: A Survey, Fourth Edition, the same text is also being made available in this two-volume paperbound edition. Except for the addition of separate indexes for each volume, the contents of this edition are exactly the same as those of the one-volume hardcover edition. Also, Chapter 16, "Reconstructing the Nation," has been included both at the end of Volume I and at the beginning of Volume II, so that the semester or quarter break can be conveniently made at either 1865 or 1877. The Instructor's Manual that accompanies the one-volume edition applies equally well to this edition.*

During the four years since the previous edition of this book appeared, a good deal of new history has been made—new history both in the sense of actual events and in the sense of scholarly writings. In revising the book, we have extended our account to include recent events, and we have made numerous changes throughout in order to reflect developments in historical scholarship. In particular, we have given increased attention to the role of minorities and of women in American history.

We have revised not only the text itself but also the special features. We have replaced a number of the "boxes" containing excerpts from historical records of various kinds and thus introducing the student to aspects of the past as it was experienced by people of the time. We have incorporated some of the latest views in our historiographical essays, "Where Historians Disagree," which acquaint the student with some of the continuing conflicts of interpretation among historians. To this series we have added an essay, "Why Historians Disagree," to suggest reasons for and limits to the differences in interpretation. Gerald Bernstein, an expert in art history, has provided a completely new series of pictorial essays on "The Course of American Art." These inserts, with pictures in full color and with a running commentary, provide a synopsis of trends in art and architecture.

In the text proper, over half of the illustrations have been freshly chosen for this edition. Several new maps have been drawn, and some of the others have been redrawn in the interest of clarity and informativeness. A few of the charts and graphs are new. Bibliographies and appendices have been brought up to date.

In the work of revision we have had the benefit of editorial expertise provided by Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated. We wish particularly to thank Helen D. Litton, who as project editor of this edition has had a truly creative part in its production. We have been immeasurably aided by historical scholars, experts in their respective fields, who have examined and criticized parts of our earlier editions. For the sake of objectivity, some of these scholars have made their critiques without our being informed of their names. Since it is impossible to identify all the critics, we have decided to identify none of them, but we cannot forgo this opportunity to extend to all of them our most sincere thanks. We have been greatly helped also by users of the text, students as well as instructors, who have sent us criticisms and corrections. To these sharp-eyed and well informed readers, too, we wish to express our profound gratitude. We shall continue to be grateful for suggestions regarding corrections or other improvements to be made in future reprintings and revisions.

R.N.C.  
T.H.W.  
F.F.

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# **American History:**

## **A Survey**

# From the Old World to the New





# One

The history of the United States from its colonial beginnings is fairly short. It covers a period of less than 100 years, a period that can be spanned by the overlapping lifetimes of a mere half dozen men. Yet the roots of American civilization go deep into the human past. Their roots are to be traced mostly to the Old World, not the New.

There is no evidence that human life originated in the New World. No bones or fossils of the apelike ancestors of man, such as those unearthed on other continents, have ever been found in either North or South America. The earliest remains of humanity so far discovered here are, at the most, only about 25,000 years old.

The American continent was peopled as a result of two long continuing immigration movements, the first from Asia, the second from Europe and Africa. Probably the first began thousands of years ago when Siberian tribes, in search of new hunting grounds or of refuge from pursuing enemies, crossed over the Bering Strait to Alaska. Crossings by Asians, a few at a time, went on for centuries, then finally ceased. From Alaska the newcomers and their descendants fanned out to populate both the continents. By 1492 there were perhaps a million people north of Mexico, 2 million in Mexico and Central America, and 6 million (some estimates run much higher) in South America.

The Stone Age forefathers of these people brought little with them from Asia. Over the centuries the first Americans developed for themselves such tools and customs as they possessed when the European arrived. At that time the aboriginal cultures ranged from the simple to the complex, from those of primitive acorn-gathering tribes to that of the Aztecs, the inheritors of the Mayas who by A.D. 1000 had created in Central America one of the most brilliant civilizations.

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## English Wigwags

*The first English settlers were unfamiliar with the log cabin that later became typical of the American frontier. They constructed temporary shelters of various kinds, including wigwags patterned after those of the Indians. Shown are reconstructions of such buildings in Salem, Massachusetts. (The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.)*

then existing anywhere in the world. Technological development in America, however, lagged behind that in Europe and Asia. As late as 1492 none of the Indians were using wheeled vehicles or machines or, indeed, wheels of any kind.

The second peopling of the Americas began with the expansion of Europe in the end of

the medieval and the start of the modern period. The history of the United States is an extension of European and particularly English history. The new Americans had much to learn from those already here, and they were to be influenced a good deal by the wilderness environment they found, but their way of life was to be based mainly on the European traditions they brought with them.

## The Epoch of Discovery

Between the time when those first Siberian tribesmen desecrated the headlands of Alaska and the time thousands of years later when Christopher Columbus sighted a West Indian island, no doubt other wanderers from abroad—certainly from Scandinavia and possibly from Egypt and elsewhere—caught at least a glimpse of some part of America. If so, these “discoveries” did not lead to any general knowledge that such a place existed, and still less to any systematic effort to explore it. The rest of the world was not yet ready for such an enterprise. The great age of exploration had to wait for developments in Europe.

### THE QUICKENING OF EUROPE

During the Middle Ages (roughly from A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500) the civilization of Western Europe was in many ways inferior to that of ancient Greece or Rome. After Germanic barbarians had overrun the Roman Empire, the dream of Roman peace and unity lingered on. The countries of medieval Europe were thought to form a single whole, under the spiritual authority of the Roman Catholic Church and the political authority of what was called the Holy Roman Empire. But kings often asserted power independently of the emperor, and nobles asserted power independently of the kings. Ordinary people, the serfs, tied by custom to the soil, worked the fields while their lords engaged in desultory warfare and chivalric games. Merchants and craftsmen were handicapped by the disorders that prevailed much of the time. Except within the Church, art and learning had

few practitioners, and it fell to the monasteries to keep alive the memory of past greatness.

Medieval Europe was backward even by comparison with certain other areas of the contemporary world. Though India and China, like the Roman Empire, had suffered from invasion and conquest, they had fallen upon no “dark age” comparable to that of Europe. The land of the Moslems, extending around the southern rim of the Mediterranean and on to the east of it, supported science, industry, and commerce such as no country of Christian Europe could match. Moslem scholars were familiar with classical learning and far surpassed it in such fields as mathematics, with their Arabic numerals and their decimal system (based on a concept of early India). The wonders of the Far East dazzled the few Europeans who, like the Venetian merchant Marco Polo, got a chance to visit them, and the wonders of the Near East amazed the crusading knights who set out to recover the Holy Land from the infidels.

Forces leading to the awakening of Europe and the discovery of America were set in motion around A.D. 1000 by an outpouring of the Norsemen from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. These Vikings made conquests as far east as Russia, as far south as France and the British Isles, and as far west as Iceland and Greenland. Two of them, Biarni Heriulfson and Leif Ericson, on separate voyages, even touched upon the coast of North America, but later attempts at colonization failed, and neither of these men is generally considered the effective discoverer of the New World. Indirectly, however, the Norse did contribute to the subsequent discovery or rediscovery by Columbus



They pioneered in the construction of ocean-going ships, stimulated trade over the area of their widespread conquests, and infused into the life of Europe much of their own energy and daring. Their descendants in France, the Normans (who set up kingdoms in England, Italy and Sicily, and northern Africa), provided outstanding leadership in the Crusades.

The Crusades further encouraged ship-building and commerce. In Syria and Egypt the Crusaders got acquainted with a number of exotic goods – spices, perfumes, drugs, silks, china, glassware, gems – which were brought by land and by sea all the way from the Orient. In the Near East some Europeans, especially the Italians, set up trading posts where they exchanged for Oriental commodities the gold, silver, copper, lead, and tin from the mines of Western Europe. These traders sent their imports on to such wholesaling centers as Pisa, Genoa, and Venice, which distributed the goods among merchants from other towns and ultimately among the consumers, remote from the original sources of supply in China, India, or the "Spice Islands" of the East Indies.

This commerce fostered the growth of towns and gave a new importance to town life in Europe. The townsmen or bourgeoisie came to form a substantial "middle" class between the nobles and the clergy above them and the serfs below. They accumulated capital in larger and larger amounts, making possible trading ventures of increasing size and profit. Desiring peace and security, such as would be good for business, the merchants breathed a spirit quite out of harmony with feudalism and its disorders. In the contests between kings and turbulent nobles, the bourgeoisie came to the support of the kings and thus aided in the rise of centralized national governments.

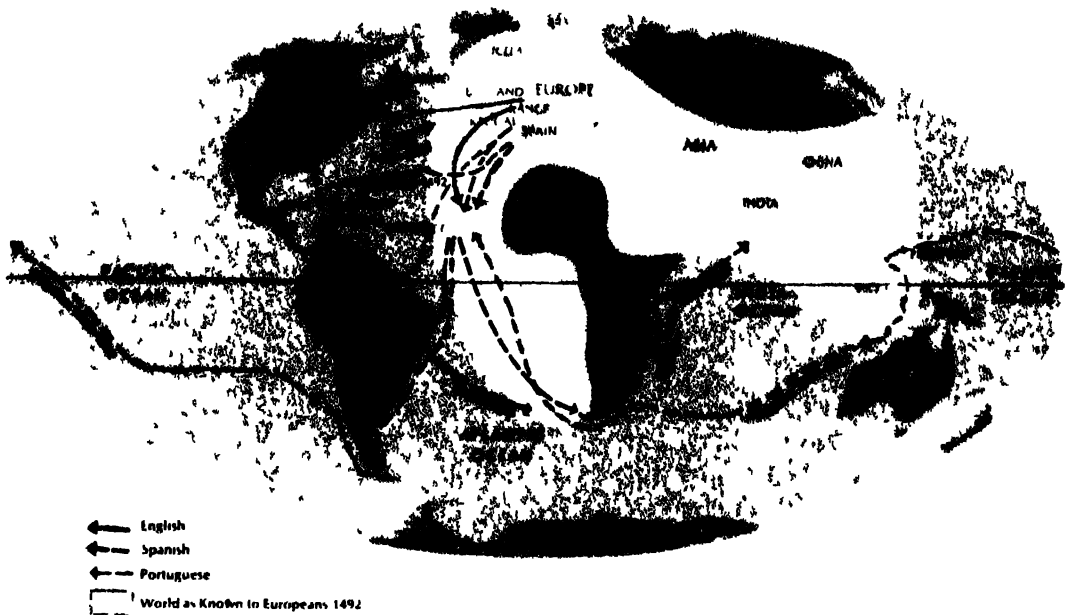
Increased wealth, leisure, and security made possible a greater cultivation of the things of the mind and prepared the way for the Renaissance in Europe. The Renaissance was marked by a changing outlook on life. Formerly, preoccupied with their own sinfulness and weakness, men had viewed their earthly lives as contemptible and had tried to concentrate their thoughts upon eternity. Now, with increasing human self-confidence, they began to show more and more interest in the world about them. Formerly they had relied for their ideas mostly on the authority of the Bible

and the works of Aristotle as expounded by the churchmen. Now many became willing to observe, experiment, and test truths for themselves. This changing attitude was involved both in the renewed study of Greek and Roman classics and in the creation of vernacular literatures. It was related also to the multiplication of efforts to control the natural environment through applied science and technology rather than through prayer or magic.

Among the inventions coming into use after the twelfth century were guns and gunpowder, bellows and blast furnaces, various machines powered by water or wind, movable type and the printing press, the mechanical clock, improvements in ship design and construction, and several devices intended to aid the art of navigation. The compass, at first only a needle magnetized with lodestone and floated in water, told the navigator his direction. He could obtain his latitude by sighting a fixed star with the quadrant, the cross-staff, or the astrolabe. Theoretically he could calculate his longitude by means of the clock, but in actual practice this was not accurate enough to help him much (until the invention of the chronometer in the eighteenth century). So he continued to follow the coasts when feasible, and when he ventured out of sight of land, he proceeded (as Columbus did) mainly by dead reckoning, setting his course by the compass, and finding his position by elapsed time and estimated speed.

Geographical knowledge was still, as in ancient times, a mixture of fable and fact, even though map making had improved remarkably. Mariners, foremost among them the Italians, carefully charted the shorelines along which they sailed, until the coastal areas of almost all the known world had been accurately mapped. On the high seas away from the familiar routes, however, everything remained a matter of speculation. Practical sailors and educated men believed that the earth was a sphere, but many of them underestimated its size. The first globe ever made, the work of a Nuremberg cartographer in 1492, showed an unbroken ocean stretching westward from Europe around to Asia and occupying only about a third of the earth's surface.

On the European edge of this sea of darkness stood the rising nation-states of England, France, Holland, Portugal, and Spain, each with a strong government and a consciousness



### Early Voyages of Discovery

of national unity. These countries, while the most powerful in Europe, were also the most distant from the rich sources of the Oriental trade. In the process of this trade, Italian and Arab merchants added their profits and commissions, and various rulers added their tolls and taxes, so that by the time Oriental wares reached the Atlantic nations the price was outrageously high, and excessive amounts of money were drained away to the East. If the middlemen somehow could be by-passed, the Western merchants could gain larger profits for themselves and the Western nations could end the troublesome loss of specie. Here was an adequate motive for finding new routes, entirely by sea, that could be controlled from home. The search for new approaches to the East led to the discovery of new lands in the West, in that presumably empty ocean that lay at the back of Europe.

### WESTWARD TO THE EAST

Without the wealth of the merchants and the organizing power of the nation-states, the glorious age of exploration would have been un-

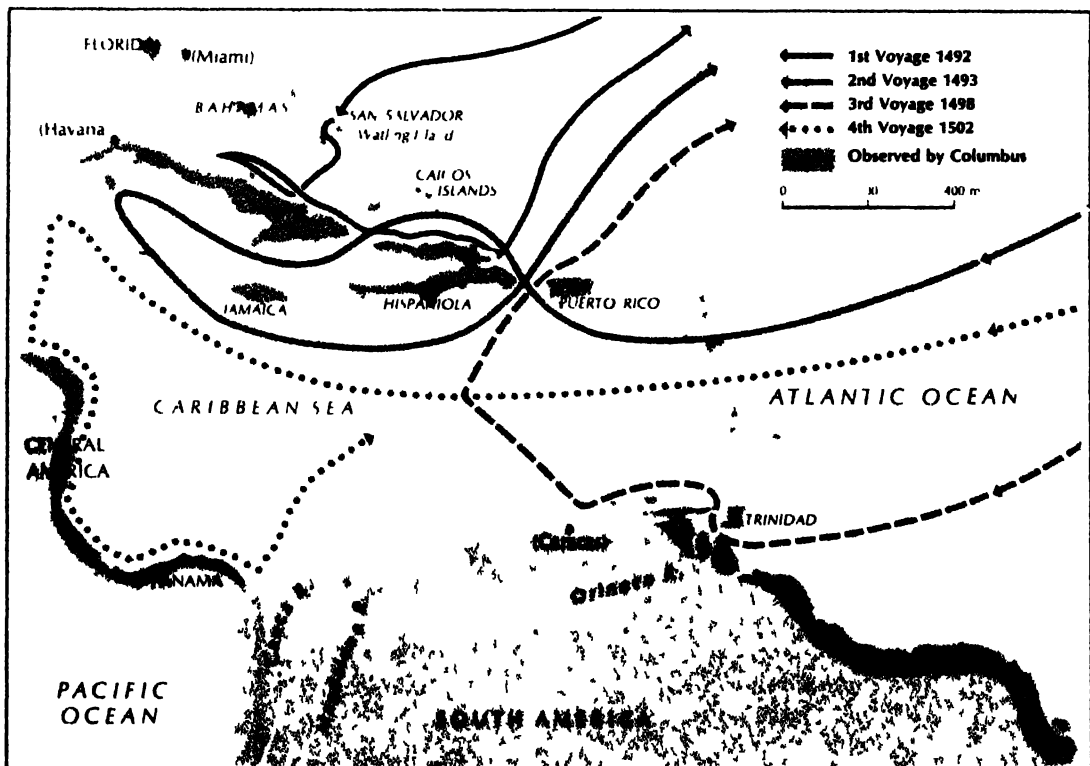
thinkable. But it would also have been inconceivable without patriotic and religious zeal, skillful seamanship, bold imagination, and courageous leadership.

Portugal early took the lead as an exploring nation. Its maritime supremacy owed a great deal to one man, Prince Henry the Navigator, who devoted his life to nautical studies and to the promotion of exploration. Concentrating upon the western coast of Africa, with the visionary aim of establishing a Christian empire to aid in war against the Moors, and with the more practical object of finding gold, Prince Henry sent out expedition after expedition, some of his mariners going as far south as Cape Verde. After his death in 1460 his work was carried on by intrepid explorers advancing still farther south. At last, in 1486, Bartholomeu Diaz went clear around the southern tip of the continent, and in 1497-1498 Vasco da Gama proceeded all the way to India. In 1500 the next fleet bound for India, that of Pedro Cabral, was blown off its southward course and happened upon the coast of Brazil. So America would have been discovered within a decade even if Columbus had never made his famous voyage of 1492.

Christopher Columbus, who was born and reared in Genoa, got most of his seafaring knowledge and experience in the service of the Portuguese. He was not the first man to think of reaching the East by sailing west, but he was the first to do something about it. Though an industrious student of geography, he was convinced of the feasibility of his plan as a result of errors rather than special insight. From his reading of Marco Polo's wondrous travel book, from his correspondence with the Florentine geographer Toscanelli, and from other studies and his own calculations, he gathered that the world was smaller than it actually is and that the Asian continent extended farther eastward than it actually does. So he concluded that the western ocean was narrow enough to be crossed on a relatively brief voyage. But he failed to convince the King of Portugal, and as the Portuguese progressed with their own route to the East around Africa, they complete

ly lost interest in the idea of a westward crossing.

Columbus then turned from Portugal to Spain. Though not a maritime people like the Portuguese, the Spaniards were proud, energetic, and zealous. They were being unified under the strongest monarchy in Europe after the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile. To Queen Isabella the importunate Columbus appealed for money, men, and ships with which to carry out his project and thereby extend the sway of Christianity and the power and glory of Spain. For several years the Queen withheld her aid, partly because her advisers doubted Columbus' theories and partly because she was busy with Christianizing and conquering Spain itself. In 1492, with the fall of the Moorish stronghold of Granada, the Mohammedans were practically eliminated from Spanish soil, and during that same year the Jews who rejected conversion were



The Lands That Columbus Saw on His Four Voyages

forced to leave the country. At last Isabella granted Columbus his request.

On his first voyage, with the *Pinta*, the *Niña*, and the *Santa Maria* and with ninety men, Columbus steered as straight as he could for Japan. He thought he had arrived there when, ten weeks after embarking, he landed on Watling Island in the Bahamas, and he thought he had reached the China coast when he pushed on to Cuba. He returned to Spain with a few natives — he called them “Indians” — but he brought no news of the great Khan’s court in China and no samples of the famous wealth of the Indies. The next year, with a much larger expedition, he discovered other islands and left a colony on one of them, Hispaniola. On a third voyage, in 1498, cruising along the northern coast of South America, he passed the mouth of the Orinoco River and surmised that such a large fresh-water stream must emerge from a continent, one separate from Asia. On his last voyage, in 1502, he tried to sail around the northwestern end of the continent so as to find the rich and civilized part of the Indies, but he was blocked by the Isthmus of Panama and succeeded only in exploring the Caribbean coast of Central America. He died still thinking he had been in at least the fringes of the Far East.

At first a hero, then a man in disgrace, Columbus was not even honored in the naming of the land he had discovered. Disregarding Columbus’ promised monopoly, Spain itself licensed numerous explorers after him, and rival governments sent out expeditions of their own. The Portuguese, who claimed the whole region of his discoveries, promptly dispatched a fleet to the scene (1501). A Florentine merchant, Americus Vesputius, who was aboard, afterward wrote partly fictitious letters describing several visits to the new continent, and a German geographer, Martin Waldseemüller, published one of the letters with the suggestion that the land be named for Americus. The name stuck.

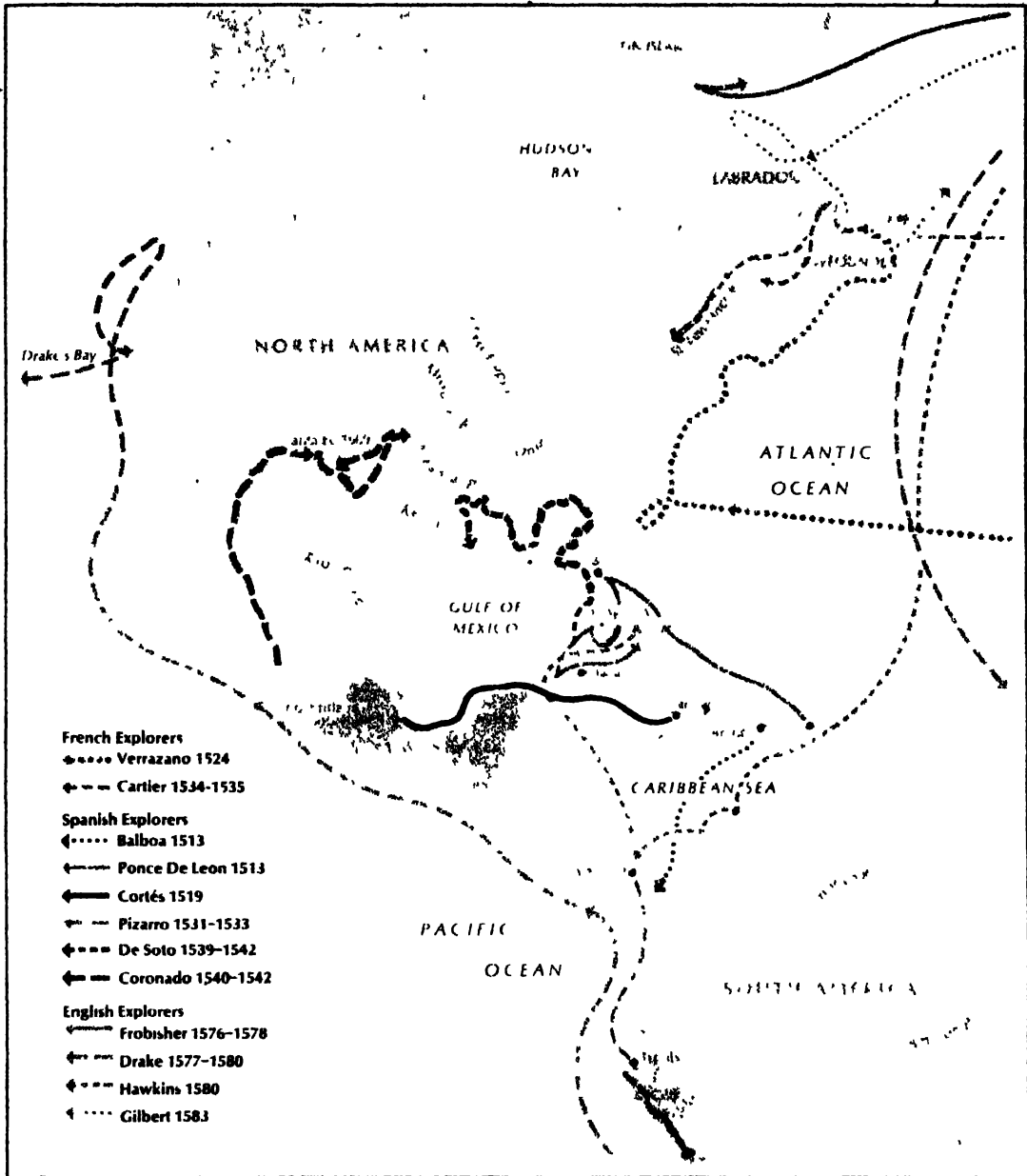
Yet Columbus, for all his misconceptions, deserved the fame that ultimately came to him. He dispelled the terrors of the unknown ocean and led the way to the New World. The explorers of many nations who followed him were only carrying on the work he had begun. Just as he had done on his final voyage, they concentrated their efforts mainly on the search for a water passage that would lead through or around the new lands and on to the riches of

the Far East. They never found the kind of passage they sought (because it did not exist until 1914, when the Panama Canal was opened), but they revealed the outlines of both continents and made known the vastness of the territory available for European use.

Spain, turning to the sea as a result of Columbus’ initiative, replaced Portugal as the foremost exploring nation. Vasco de Balboa fought his way across the Isthmus of Panama (1513) and gazed upon the great ocean that separated America from China and the Indies. Seeking access to that ocean, Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese in Spanish employ, found the strait that now bears his name at the southern end of South America, struggled through the stormy narrows and into the ocean, so calm by contrast that he christened it the Pacific, then proceeded to the Philippines. There Magellan himself fell at the hands of natives, but his expedition went on to complete the first circumnavigation of the globe (1519–1522). By 1550 the Spaniards had explored the coasts of North America as far north as Oregon and Labrador.

England followed Spain as a sponsor of voyages westward in search of the East. John Cabot, Genoa-born like Columbus and inspired by the latter’s unsuccessful efforts to reach the Orient, sailed twice to the northeastern coast of North America under the auspices of King Henry VII, the first time in 1497. Columbus never laid eyes upon the North American continent, Cabot was the first to leave a record of having viewed it, and he may therefore be considered its effective discoverer. Much later, after failing to find a northeast passage around Europe, Englishmen began to look for a northwest passage around North America. Martin Frobisher made three trips, the last one in 1578, and discovered Frobisher’s Bay, Baffin’s Land, and the Eskimos, but not the strait he was after. Year after year, other Englishmen kept up the search.

Meanwhile, under Francis I, the government of France promoted a series of expeditions to the New World. In 1523–1524 Giovanni Verrazano, a Florentine navigator, followed the shore northward from North Carolina in quest of an opening to Asia for France. Between 1534 and 1541 Jacques Cartier and Jean François Roberval, on separate voyages, tried to find the much-sought passage by pushing up the St. Lawrence River. The Dutch govern-



### Explorations of Sixteenth-Century America

ment, a latecomer, commissioned the Englishman Henry Hudson to find an all-Dutch route to Asia. He was looking for it when, in 1609, he entered the river that afterward was named for him. Though much valuable information came from all this activity by men of several national-

ities sailing under diverse flags, often not their own, the precise relationship of the Asian and North American continents remained something of a mystery until 1728, when Vitus Bering, a Dane in Russian employ, voyaged through the strait that separates the two.

## The Colonizing Impulse

While remaining an obstacle to those preoccupied with routes to the East, the New World became for others a goal in itself, a possible source of wealth rivaling and even surpassing the original Indies. The Spaniards soon were building themselves an American empire. On the basis of Columbus' discoveries and a papal decree, they claimed the whole of the New World, except for a chunk of it (Brazil) which they left to the Portuguese. Other nations waited a century or more to grow into successful colonizing powers. During this time the English (and the French as well) were developing the national strength and unity that would enable them to compete with Spain. Finally the English and others challenged the Spanish monopoly at least in North America.

### THE SPANISH COLONIES

Awaiting the Spaniards were the riches of the native Aztec and Inca empires. The Aztecs were the heirs of Mayan civilization, which had reached its height at about A.D. 1000. In Central America the Mayas had built elaborately carved stone temples and pyramids, bred corn from a kind of wild grass, devised an accurate calendar from astronomical observations, and invented a number system similar to the Arabic and superior to the Roman. After conquering the Mayas and other, less highly civilized peoples, the Aztecs ruled them all through their emperor, whose capital was on the present site of Mexico City. From Cuzco in the mountains of Peru the Incas ruled a more highly centralized and even larger empire, one of the largest of all history, and they constructed thousands of miles of paved roads (or rather pathways, for they had no wheeled vehicles) to hold their empire together.

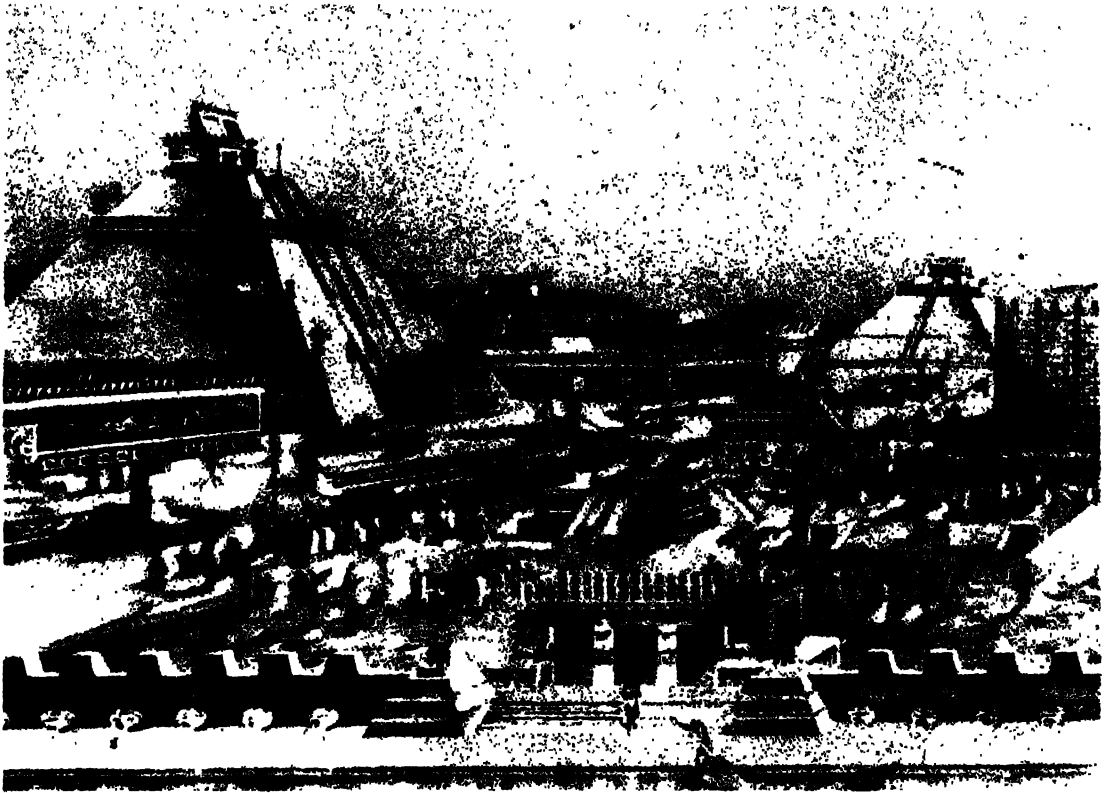
The early Spanish colonists, beginning with those Columbus brought on his second voyage, settled in the islands of the Caribbean, where they tried without much luck to enslave the Indians and uncover gold. Then (during the same years, 1519-1522, that Magellan's fleet was on its way around the world) Hernando Cortés destroyed the Aztec empire and looted its treasure. The news of silver to be found in Mexico turned the attention of the Spaniards to

the mainland. From the island colonies and from the mother country fortune hunters descended upon Mexico in a movement comparable in some ways to the nineteenth-century gold rushes elsewhere in the world. When Francisco Pizarro conquered Peru and revealed the wealth of the Incas (1532-1538), the way was opened for a similar advance into South America.

Exploration and colonization in Spanish America was primarily a work of private enterprise, carried on by individual leaders, with little direct support from the government at home. Before a man could undertake the job he had to get a royal license. By its terms the King was to have a tenth of the wealth to be produced in the new colony, and the colonizer was to have a tenth in addition to a generous estate, other lands to divide among his followers, and the right for himself and for them to the use of native labor. But he had to equip and finance his own expedition and take the risk of loss or ruin. He might succeed and make a fortune, or through shipwreck or other accident he might lose everything including his life, as many an adventurer did.

The colonial population came only in small part from Spain itself and scarcely at all from other countries in Europe, for few Spaniards were able or willing to emigrate, and foreigners with a few exceptions were excluded from the colonies. Colonial officials were supposed to bring their wives with them, but among the ordinary settlers men outnumbered women by at least ten to one. Naturally, then, most of the Spanish men married Indian women, and a sizable mixed population grew up. There was nevertheless a manpower shortage, which the Spaniards tried to overcome by forcing the Indians to work for wages. The first experiments with forced labor, as on the island of Hispaniola, resulted in the near extermination of the natives, but Indians continued to work in the mines or on the ranches of the mainland for centuries. As workers on the plantations of the islands and coastal areas, Negro slaves began to be imported as early as 1502, the African slave trade having been established by the Portuguese more than fifty years before that.

The whites exploited the colored peoples, yet the Spanish conquerors were not peculiarly



#### **Tenochtitlán – The Aztec Capital**

*This is a model reconstructing the central square, Tenochtitlán, located on the site of the present Mexico City, had a population of about 100,000 in 1502 when the last of the emperors, Montezuma II, began his reign. His empire, covering much of central and southern Mexico, was a rather loose association of city-states from which he collected heavy tribute. The Aztecs developed a complex and magnificent civilization, made up largely of elements adapted from the Mayas and other neighboring peoples. In Tenochtitlán there were surgeons and physicians who are believed to have been as skillful as the best in contemporary Europe, and there were hospitals and nurses. There were also human sacrifices. To appease the Aztec gods, young men and women captives were slaughtered on top of the pyramids. These structures, like those of the Mayas, were comparable in size to the pyramids of ancient Egypt but were used as temples rather than burial monuments. When Hernando Cortés, the Spanish conqueror of Mexico, entered Tenochtitlán in 1519, he found in the central square a rack which held the skulls of about 100,000 sacrificial victims. (Courtesy of The American Museum of Natural History)*

cruel and predatory, no more so than the later English colonists. The millions of Indians who died in Spanish America were mostly victims of the white man's diseases. The Spanish reputation for harsh treatment of the natives arose originally from the writings of a sensitive friend of the Indians in the colonies who was himself a Spaniard – Bartolomeo de las Casas.

And if the Spaniards seemed at times to have a monomania for gold and silver, they were in this respect little different from Englishmen such as those at Jamestown who spent

their first precious weeks prospecting feverishly for gold. The difference was that the Spaniards, or many of them at least, were fabulously successful. Over a period of three centuries the mines in Spanish America yielded more than ten times as much gold and silver as all the rest of the mines in the world.

The Spanish settlers farmed as well as mined, and they brought in elements of European civilization which, over the centuries, proved far more valuable to the New World than all the gold and silver they took out. They

transferred their language and learning, their tools and mechanical arts, from the homeland to the colonies. They transplanted grains and fruits and vegetables, including wheat, oranges, lemons, grapes, bananas, olives, and sugar cane. They introduced domestic animals such as cows, pigs, mules, and especially horses, which soon multiplied and ran wild even beyond the colonial frontiers, becoming accessible to the Indians far north on the Great Plains and revolutionizing their way of life. And though the Spaniards brought the sword, they also brought the cross. Priests or friars accompanied every colonizing venture, making each settlement a Christian community and carrying the gospel bravely to the heathen.

The government of the colonies was reasonably efficient and highly centralized. But the Spanish empire did have weaknesses. For one thing, its commercial policy was unusually inflexible and strict. To enforce the collection of

duties and provide protection against pirates, the government required all trade with the colonies to be carried on through a single Spanish port and only a few colonial ports, in fleets making but two voyages a year. This system checked the prosperity of many of the colonists, such as those in Argentina, who had to import their European manufactures and export their own agricultural products through distant Porto Bello on the Isthmus of Panama.

One of the most serious weaknesses of the empire resulted from the facts of geography. Above Mexico the colonial domain widened out into the whole continent of North America with no natural barrier such as would limit the aspirations of the Spaniards or provide them with an easily defensible boundary. They could not people the area within this wide border as thickly enough to make it secure, yet they kept expending energy and resources in trying to hold and even to advance beyond it. The mo-

#### **Mission San Xavier del Bac**

*During the eighteenth century the Spaniards established numerous missions on the northern frontiers of New Spain. One of the finest and best preserved of the churches is San Xavier del Bac, which is located near the present city of Tucson, Arizona. Spaniards visited this area as early as 1539. They were looking for the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola which, according to Indian reports, were full of gold. Eventually missionaries arrived to Christianize the Indians. (Wayne Andrews)*





tives for this northward push varied. Such early explorers as Coronado, De Soto, and Ponce de Leon looked for fabled treasures in the wilderness. Men of religious orders, Jesuit or Franciscan, went out to save souls, the Franciscans establishing a chain of missions, which by 1776 extended through California as far north as San Francisco Bay. Frontiersmen moved into New Mexico and Texas to prospect for silver or engage in the Indian trade. Viceroyal expeditions set up remote military outposts, as at St. Augustine in Florida (1565). Indeed, the requirements of defense were always a consideration—defense against the raids of wild tribes and against the colonial thrusts of rival European nations—and *presidios* or fortresses dotted the frontier. But it was a wasting struggle, and in the end a losing one.

These outer reaches of the empire, eventually incorporated into the United States, brought elements of Spanish culture directly into the amalgam of American civilization. Many of these elements are indicated by Spanish words that have become Americanized, words like *ranch*, *rodeo*, *corral*, *lariat*, *patio*, and *calaboose*.

#### ENGLAND AGAINST SPAIN

While Spain was building her American empire, the religious unity of Western Europe disappeared, with profound consequences for the colonization of America. As of 1500, the Christian world already was divided between East and West, between the Church of Constantinople and the Church of Rome. But virtually all of Western Europe was Roman Catholic and, in spiritual matters, recognized the supremacy of the Pope. Soon Western Europe itself was divided, between Catholics and those who protested, or Protestants, of whom there came to be many sects. The Protestant leaders intended to reform the Church, and so their movement is known as the Reformation.

The Reformation began in 1517 when Martin Luther, a German professor of theology, challenged the right of the Pope to sell "indulgences" for the remission of sins. Before long, Luther broke completely with the Roman Church. He concluded that man could not find salvation through the Church, its priests, or its sacraments, that man could be saved only by faith, by a thoroughgoing belief in redemption

through Christ. Advancing beyond strictly religious matters, Luther advised German rulers to seize Church lands. Rapidly he won converts among both rulers and people.

While Luther was getting his revolt under way, a second great Protestant leader arose, one who was to have a far more direct and important influence upon American civilization. This man was John Calvin. A Frenchman by birth, Calvin studied law and theology in Paris. About 1533 he left the Catholic Church, and then the country. Fleeing to Switzerland, he settled in Geneva, and there he set up a kind of church-state.

In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536), one of the great theological works of all time, Calvin expounded his religious views. The main points, much simplified, were these: God is all-knowing, all-powerful. Man is weak, helpless, born in sin, and cannot save himself by his own efforts: he must rely upon God. The future of every soul is foreordained from the beginning of things, long before the soul is born. God's elect would give evidence of their future glory by the upright, moral life they lived in this world. Others had a duty to honor God and, regardless, had no choice but to conform. Calvin insisted upon hard work and strict morality. The Calvinist doctrines, stern and even terrifying as they appear, appealed to many people because of their very forthrightness and puritanical austerity.

Neither Calvin nor Luther, however, caused England to leave the Church of Rome. England broke away because of the political ambitions and marital difficulties of one of her kings, Henry VIII. He coveted the monastery wealth, disliked the loss of money in English contributions to the Pope, desired a male heir (which his wife Catherine, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, failed to give him), and fell in love with Anne Boleyn. When the Pope refused to grant a dispensation permitting him to marry Anne, Henry VIII with the cooperation of Parliament made himself (1534) "the supreme head of the Church of England." He was no theological reformer: he kept the main tenets of Roman Catholic doctrine.

After the death of Henry VIII (1547) the Church of England went first to Protestant and then, under "Bloody Mary," to Catholic extremes, with persecutions and martyrdoms on both sides. Finally the Anglican Church straightened out upon a steady middle course

during the long and glorious reign of Anne Boleyn's fiery, red-headed, able daughter, Elizabeth I (1558-1603). Under Elizabeth, the Church was given a theology more Protestant than it had had under her father, Henry VIII.

While losing many lands to Lutheranism, Calvinism, or Anglicanism, the Church of Rome undertook to reform itself and win back as much of the world as possible. This undertaking is known as the Catholic Reformation or the Counter Reformation. King Philip II of Spain assumed the task of leading the Roman Catholic forces of the world against the Protestants.

In 1568 the Dutch revolted against Philip II, their Spanish overlord. They fought as Dutch men for national independence, and as Calvinists for religious freedom. They were an industrial and maritime people, noted for their linen and woolen cloth, their ships, their fisheries, and their trade. Holding an advantage upon the sea, they robbed the galleons bringing treasure from the New World to Spain. When Spain agreed to a truce (1609), the Dutch turned to planning American colonies of their own.

In their forays against Spanish shipping the Dutch received encouragement and aid from England. Queen Elizabeth had to fend against the machinations of Philip II as he sought to enhance the power of Spain and win back for Rome the areas of Christendom that had been lost. English Catholics were ready to collaborate with a foreign king in forwarding this presumably holy work. With Philip's encouragement they plotted to get rid of Elizabeth and put Mary Stuart, "Queen of Scots," on the throne. Elizabeth, foiling them, had Mary executed.

In this undeclared war England did not remain on the defensive. Seamen loyal to the Queen—urged on by patriotism, piety, and plunder—struck at the colonial sources of Spanish strength in every way they could. Roaming the waters of Spanish America, these "sea dogs" smuggled slaves, pirated treasure ships, and robbed unprotected towns. The greatest of them all, Francis Drake, followed Magellan's route into the Pacific, looted his way northward along the American coast, went on around the world, and returned a profit of several thousand percent to the Queen, who secretly had backed his venture. When she knighted him, instead of rebuking him as the Spanish ambassador demanded, she indicated plainly enough

that England was ready to challenge Spain upon the sea.

The decisive test soon came. After England had made an alliance with the rebels of the United Netherlands, Philip II declared war. Determining to invade and conquer England, he assembled an unprecedented fleet of his best and largest warships, an "Invincible Armada." But the Spaniards thought of themselves as soldiers more than sailors, and they applied their ideas of land warfare to naval combat, loading troops on their unwieldy vessels to board the enemy craft and grapple at close range with the latter's men. The English, islanders that they were, relied upon their navy and their privateers, not upon an army. They had fast, maneuverable ships that could sail into the Spanish fleet, fire destructive broadsides, and escape to return and fire again. When, in 1588, the Armada appeared in the English Channel, the new naval tactics did not have a chance to show fully their superiority, for a terrible storm helped to scatter the invaders and destroy most of their ships.

England, having become the world's foremost sea power, could not be kept from colonial enterprises of her own on the other side of the Atlantic. Already Englishmen had made their first, rather tentative efforts to start settlements in the New World. Soon the English were to people the Atlantic coast of North America with colonies which eventually would grow into a great continental nation.

### ENGLISHMEN LOOK OVERSEAS

The dream of America as a place of unique opportunity—for liberty, abundance, security, and peace—appeared in England soon after Columbus' discovery. This dream found a classic expression in *Utopia*, a book written by Sir Thomas More and published in Latin in 1516 (translated, 1551), which described society on an imaginary island supposedly discovered by a companion of Americus Vesputius in the waters of the New World. Life in *Utopia* was as nearly perfect as human beings guided by reason and good will could make it. Though the Utopians lived comfortably enough, they scorned the mere accumulation of material things, and while all were expected to keep busy, none was oppressed or overworked. They enjoyed complete freedom of thought but

were careful not to offend one another in the expression of their beliefs. True lovers of peace, they went to war only to defend their neighbors and thereby ensure their own ultimate safety. In presenting such a picture of an ideal community, the book commented by indirection upon the social and economic evils of More's England.

The Tudor age, for all its literary glory and its swashbuckling spirit, was not a happy time for most of the common people, who suffered not only from war and religious strife but also from the effects of economic change. While the population of England grew steadily—from 3 million in 1485 to 4 million in 1603—the food supply did not increase proportionately. Landowners concentrated on the production of wool. Neither cotton nor silk being yet in general use, wool was in great demand for making cloth. Land tilled at one time by serfs and later by rent-paying tenants, much of it better suited to sheep raising than to the production of crops, was steadily enclosed for sheep runs and taken away from the farmers on it.

Thousands of evicted tenants roamed the countryside in gangs, to the alarm of more fortunate householders, whose feelings are preserved in the nursery rhyme: "Hark, hark! The dogs do bark: the beggars are coming to town." The Elizabethan government passed rather ineffectual laws for halting enclosures, relieving the worthy poor, and compelling the able-bodied or "sturdy beggars" to work. Relatively few of these could find reemployment in raising or manufacturing wool. All the while the cost of living rose, mainly because of an increased money supply arising from the output of Spanish gold and silver mines in America. England, it seemed, contained either too many sheep or too many people.

Amid the widespread distress, a rising class of merchant capitalists prospered from the expansion of foreign trade as they turned from the export of raw wool to the export of woollen cloth. These merchant capitalists gathered up the raw material, put it out for spinning and weaving in individual households, and then sold the finished product both in England and abroad.

At first each exporter did business on his own, though he might belong to the Company of Merchant Adventurers. This company regulated the activities of its members, secured trading privileges for them, and provided pro-

tection for their voyages. In time chartered companies sprang up, each with a monopoly from the sovereign of England for trading in a particular region, among them the Muscovy Company (1555), the Levant Company (1581), the Barbary Company (1585), the Guinea Company (1588), and the East India Company (1600). Some of these were regulated companies, similar to the Merchant Adventurers, each member doing business separately. Others were joint-stock companies, much like modern corporations, with stockholders sharing risk and profit either on single ventures or, as became more common, on a permanent basis. These investors often made fantastic profits from the exchange of English manufactures, especially woollens, for exotic goods, and they felt a powerful urge to continue with the expansion of their profitable trade.

To further this drive, spokesmen for the merchant capitalists developed a set of ideas about the proper relation of government and business—ideas supporting the argument that (notwithstanding the sufferings of the dispossessed) the whole nation benefited from the activities of the overseas traders. The trade of England as a whole, it was said, was basically like that of any individual or firm: transactions were worthwhile if sales exceeded purchases in value. The difference in value would have to be paid in money (gold and silver), and the inflow of money into England would stimulate business and strengthen the national economy by raising commodity prices and lowering interest rates. Merchant capitalists depended upon loans to carry on their business, and interest was considered now as a cost of production, whereas in medieval times it had been regarded as sinful usury. According to their theory, the government should act to encourage a "favorable" balance of trade—that is, an excess of exports over imports.

This economic philosophy, restated by Thomas Mun in his book *England's Treasure by Forraign Trade* (1664), came to be known in the eighteenth century as "mercantilism." It guided the economic policies not only of England but also of Spain, France, and other nation-states.

Colonies would fit well into this mercantilistic program, would also alleviate poverty and unemployment, and would serve other useful purposes, or so it seemed to a number of thoughtful Englishmen in the late sixteenth and

early seventeenth centuries. The Oxford clergyman Richard Hakluyt, who published a series of explorers' narratives and an essay (1584) on "western planting," made himself the outstanding propagandist for the establishment of colonies. He and others argued that colonies would provide an additional market for English manufacturers and that the colonial demand would give employment in the mother country to the poor who lived there "idly to the annoy of the whole state." Colonial commerce, while yielding profit for shipowners, would bring from the colonies products for which England previously had depended upon foreigners—products such as lumber, naval stores, and above all, silver and gold.

Colonies might also serve as bases for finding and controlling a westward passage to Asia, attacking the Spanish empire, and converting the Indians to Protestantism so that the Catholic revival, the Counter Reformation, would not spread to the New World.

There was yet another reason for the growing interest in colonies. The Church of England, in the form it took under Queen Elizabeth, by no means satisfied all her subjects. It was much too Protestant to suit those Englishmen who held on to the Roman Catholic faith, and at the same time it seemed too "popish" to many who opposed the ways and influence of Rome. Among these were the Puritans, who,

affected in varying degrees by the teachings of John Calvin, wished to "purify" the Church. The majority of the Puritans were content to remain within the Anglican fold but hoped to simplify the forms of worship and lessen the power of the bishops, who were appointed by the throne. A minority, the Separatists, were determined to worship as they pleased in their own independent congregations. Like all subjects, however, they were forbidden by law to absent themselves from regular Anglican services or to hold unauthorized religious meetings, and they were taxed to support the established Church.

The discontent of the Puritans and other dissenters increased after the death of Queen Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors, and the accession of James I, the first of the Stuarts, in 1603. A Scotsman, James I was looked upon as a foreigner. He was a learned man but a poor politician—the "wisest fool in Christendom," it was said. Convinced that kings ruled by divine right, he let his subjects know at the outset that he intended to govern as he pleased. He soon antagonized the Puritans, who included most of the rising businessmen, by resorting to illegal and arbitrary taxation and also by favoring English Catholics and supporting "high church" forms of elaborate ceremony. More and more religious nonconformists began to look for places of refuge outside the kingdom.

## The Wilderness Setting

The fate of the English colonies—their success or failure, the kind of development they took—was to depend in large measure upon the environment in which they were planted along the Atlantic seaboard of North America. This environment consisted not only of geographical conditions such as soil and climate, flora and fauna, but also of the human inhabitants apart from the English themselves, that is, the Indian natives and the European intruders.

### THE EASTERN WOODLANDS

Three thousand miles and more from England, the colonies were to be separated from the mother country, and yet connected with it, by

the Atlantic Ocean. The overseas crossing took from four to twelve weeks or more, in close-packed and often disease-ridden ships which sailed at irregular intervals depending on wind and weather. The distance and the difficulty of ocean travel put the colonists very much upon their own resources once they had landed on the American shore. Nevertheless, the nature of the shoreline and of the terrain behind it inclined them toward the sea, and they kept in touch with the homeland by means of the same ocean they had crossed.

Along much of its extent the coast had been submerged, and the rivers emptying into the ocean had been "drowned" by the prehistoric sinking of the continent's edge. So there was, and is, an indented coastline with a num-

ber of bays and harbors, into each of which flows one or more rivers, giving access for varying distances to and from the interior. For instance, the Charles leads to Boston harbor at its mouth, the much longer Hudson to New York harbor, the Delaware to Delaware Bay, the Susquehanna and the Potomac and the York and the James (among others) to Chesapeake Bay, and the Ashley and the Cooper to Charleston harbor. At a time when travel and transportation by water were easier and more economical than by land, the rivers with their tributaries largely determined the lines of settlement and the course of trade.

The topography of the area in which the colonies were located divides it lengthwise into three belts at different levels: the coastal plain, the piedmont plateau, and the Appalachian highland. The plain, very narrow in New England but increasing southward from New York to a width of 200 miles in Georgia, is so low that the rivers traversing it flow backward with the incoming tides, and hence it is known (in the South) as the "tidewater" region. The piedmont, 150 miles across at its widest, is several hundred or more feet higher than the plain and is set off from it by the "fall line," an imaginary line drawn through the points at which the rivers descend to the lowland over falls or rapids. From the piedmont the Appalachian Mountains rise to elevations as high as 6,000 feet in New Hampshire and North Carolina. The mountain barrier is unbroken from New England to Georgia except along the course of the Hudson and the Mohawk rivers, but between the various parallel ranges are valleys that allow fairly easy movement along the highland southwestward from Pennsylvania.

Depending upon latitude, elevation, and distance from the sea, the climate in what was English America varies a great deal from place to place, providing most though not all kinds of weather to be found within the Temperate Zone. There is a remarkable contrast between the steamy summers of the South Carolina coast and the snowy winters of the New England interior. Yet the climate on the whole was fairly similar to what Englishmen had known at home, similar enough that they could easily adapt themselves to it. The unfamiliar features—the greater extremes of heat and cold, the more violent storms, the more brilliant and abundant sunshine—generally

appealed to the newcomers and no doubt stimulated them to unwonted activity.

Soils in America resembled those in England enough to permit the growing of most of the familiar crops, in one place or another. But the soils varied considerably, from the silted river bottoms of the tidewater to the sandy pine barrens on the edge of the upcountry in the South, and from the rich lands of the Susquehanna Valley to the thin topsoil of glacier-scoured New England in the North. Subsoil minerals abounded, especially in the mountains, but most of them—coal, oil, gas—were left for later exploitation. Available in the colonial period were widely scattered deposits of iron ore, both in the mountains and in the lowland bogs. But at that time the most valuable natural resource, other than the soil itself, was the wood that grew upon it and that then served hundreds of industrial uses.

To the first colonists, America was trees. From the Atlantic to the Appalachians and beyond stretched a great forest, unbroken except for occasional small clearings made by the elements or by the Indians, and thick with tall pines, maples, oaks, and countless other varieties of trees as well as shrubs. Even before sighting land the early voyagers to America could sometimes smell the fresh and invigorating forest scent, and once they had disembarked they found themselves in a veritable Garden of Eden, full of birds and beasts for game; flowers, berries, and fruits; and infinite resources of wood. All this made a refreshing contrast with comparatively treeless England, rapidly being deforested to meet the needs of industry.

And yet the friendly forest—so green and beautiful, so rich in materials for food and shelter and manufactures of many kinds—also had its uninviting and even hostile aspects. In its shadows lurked the wolves and panthers that devoured the settler's livestock, lurked also the red men who often threatened his and his family's lives. It stood in the way of the frontiersman eager to cultivate the soil, and he had to convert forest into fields by the slow and laborious effort of girdling or else chopping down the trees, burning the dead or downed timber, and eventually uprooting the stumps.

Apart from the great forest, the geographical fact that most distinguished the new from the old country and most influenced the eco-

conomic development of the colonies was sheer space, the vast extent of the land. Not that all the land was readily accessible. The need for clearing the forest, the presence of hostile tribes, the dependence upon water transport, and ultimately the difficulty of crossing the mountain barrier—all these considerations hindered the actual occupation of the land, and they operated more and more effectively in proportion to remoteness from the seaports. Hence the English settlements, scattered though they might seem, remained on the whole fairly compact throughout the colonial period, at least in comparison with the Spanish and French settlements in the New World, though not in comparison with the crowded towns and countryside of the Old World. There populations teemed and lacked sufficient room. Here land was plentiful and people relatively scarce.

### THE WOODS INDIANS

The North American Indians had the general features of their Mongoloid ancestors—yellow or brown skin, straight and coarse black hair, and high cheekbones—but there were minor variations in physical appearance among the numerous tribes. There were greater differences in modes of living and ways of speaking. Hundreds of languages were spoken, but most of these belonged to one or another of about a dozen linguistic stocks. Men of different tribes with related languages could not always understand each other, any more than Frenchmen could understand Spaniards, nor were such tribes necessarily alike in their cultural patterns.

In 1600 along the Atlantic seaboard south of the St. Lawrence River there lived about



#### Work of the Forest Indians

A Frenchman, J. F. Lafitau, visited North America, studied the customs of the Indians, and described them in a book that was published in Paris in 1724. This one of his sketches shows members of a southeastern tribe weaving, preparing hides, cooking, grating roots, and making corn meal by pounding and winnowing corn. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)

## Indians Greet the White Man [1524]

In most cases the American natives were very hospitable to the European upon his first approach. Thus Verrill, no explanation for the King of France, reported of his visit to the North Carolina coast:

*While at anchor on this coast, there being no harbor to enter, we sent the boat on shore with twenty five men, to obtain water, but it was not possible to land without endangering the boat, on account of the immense high surf thrown up by the sea, as it was an open roadstead. Many of the natives came to the beach, indicating by various friendly signs that we might trust ourselves on shore. One of their noble deeds of friendship deserves to be made known to your Majesty. A young sailor was attempting to swim ashore through the surf, to carry them some crackknacks, as little bells, looking glasses, and other like trifles, when he came near three or four of them he tossed the things to them, and turned about to get back to the boat, but he was thrown over by the waves, and so dashed by them that he lay as it were dead upon the beach. When the people saw him in this situation, they ran and took him by the head, legs, and arms, and carried him to a distance from the surf. The young man, finding himself borne off in this way, uttered very loud cries, in fear and dismay, while they answered, as they could in their own language, showing him that he had no cause for fear. Afterward, they laid him down at the foot of a little hill, when he, took off his shirt and trousers, and covered his face, expressing the greatest astonishment at the whiteness of his skin. Our sailors in the boat, at seeing a great fire made up, and their cannon placed near it, full of fear, and full of curiosity, imagined that the natives were about to roast him. But as soon as he had recovered a little strength, after a short stay with them, showing by sign that he wished to return aboard, they took him with great affection, and accompanied him to the shore, then leaving him that he might feel more secure, they withdrew to a little hill, from which they watched him until he was safe in the boat.*

125,000 Indians. They were most heavily concentrated in southern New England and around Chesapeake Bay. The largest group, as classified by language type, were the Algonquians, who were scattered from Canada south to Virginia. Next in numbers were the Iroquois, centering in New York and forming a wedge between the northern and southern Algonquians. The Iroquois included the "five nations"—Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk—and also, far to the south, the Cherokees and the Tuscaroras. Still farther south roamed the tribes of the third largest language group, the Muskogean. These were the Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles.

Most of the tribes carried on a primitive form of agriculture. They made clearings by cutting into trees to kill them and by setting fires in the forest. Among the dead and black-

ened trunks they planted pumpkins, squash, beans, and corn—crops they had learned of indirectly from the Indians of Mexico and South America. A tribe abandoned its clearing and made a new one when the yields fell, or when the accumulated filth of the village became too deep to endure. The Indian "old fields," especially in New England, attracted incoming settlers as convenient places to begin settlement, and the newcomers eagerly adopted the cultivation of native crops, above all corn. Without the clearings and the crops that the Indians provided, the Englishmen would have had much greater difficulty than they did in getting a start in the New World.

None of the Indians of the eastern woodlands (or, for that matter, of the entire continent north of Mexico) showed a talent for political organization at all comparable to that of the Aztecs or the Incas. The nearest thing to it was

found in the Iroquois league of five nations (which became six nations in 1713 when the Tuscaroras moved north and joined the league). Other tribes had their own separate and rudimentary governments and were often at war with one another or with the Iroquois. From time to time they made alliances or temporary confederations.

The primitive tribal system offered both advantages and disadvantages for the invading Englishmen. On the one hand, the divisions and rivalries among the red men made it easier for the whites to deal with them than would otherwise have been the case. If the Indians had been united, they could possibly have driven out the invaders. On the other hand, the disunity of the tribes prevented the English from making such a quick and easy conquest as the Spaniards had made when they got control of Mexico and Peru by killing or capturing the native imperial rulers.

To Englishmen the Indians were of interest as customers for English goods and as suppliers of woodland commodities, especially hides and skins. Trade brought the white man and the red man together. It weakened the Indian, for while he obtained guns, knives, blankets, and iron pots, he also received fire-water, and he became increasingly dependent upon the white man and his commerce.

As viewed from a distance in England, the Indian in the American wilderness seemed like a strong and innocent creature, a noble savage, awaiting only an opportunity to be civilized and Christianized. Some of the colonists, after their arrival in America, continued to look upon him in that way, and by 1619 about fifty missionaries had already entered the wilds to convert native souls. But most of the colonists soon changed their image of the Indian. After a few bloody conflicts they began to consider him a wild beast fit only to be slaughtered.

In English America there was not to be the fusion of Indian and European peoples and cultures that developed in the Spanish empire. The reasons for this were various, but one of them was the fact that the Englishmen, unlike the Spaniards (and the Frenchmen), almost always came as family men, with their women-folk, and hence had much less occasion to intermarry with the aborigines.

Nevertheless, American history without the Indians would have lacked much of its spe-

cial character. Not only did the colonists receive from them a number of new things to eat, such as corn, but the English language in America was enriched by words of native origin (*moccasin* and *succotash*, to mention only two), and American thought was colored by numerous elements of Indian lore. Yet on the whole the aboriginal influence on American civilization was more negative than positive. Despite their kindly aid to the first European arrivals, the Indians formed an obstacle to the advance of white settlement, and life on the frontier derived many of its peculiarly "American" qualities from the Indian danger and the Indian wars.

### EUROPEAN RIVALS

In the wilderness the English were to encounter threats not only from the Indians but also from rival Europeans. To the south and southwest were scattered the outposts of the Spaniards who, despite a peace that Spain and England made in 1604, continued to look upon the English as intruders. The English in their settlements along the coast could not for many years feel entirely safe from attack by Spanish ships.

On the north and northwest were beginning to appear the outposts of another and eventually even more dangerous rival, France. The French founded their first permanent settlement in America at Quebec in 1608, less than a year after the English had started their first at Jamestown. New France grew in population very slowly. Few Roman Catholics felt any inclination to leave their beloved homeland, and the discontented Protestants who desired to emigrate were excluded from the colony. To the English in America, however, the French presented a danger disproportionate to their numbers, largely because of their influence upon the Algonquin Indians.

In the Indian trade the English had the advantage of cheaper goods, but the French had an offsetting advantage. While the English in the region generally bought from the Iroquois, who as middlemen secured furs from more remote tribes, the French by-passed the Iroquois and dealt directly with the Algonquins. *Coueurs de bois*, foot-loose and fearless fur traders and trappers, penetrated deep into

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the interior, made friends with the Indians, lived among them, and took squaws for wives. Thus the French gained the backing of the Hurons and other Algonquin tribes

At the same time the French antagonized the Algonquins' traditional foes, the Iroquois. When Samuel de Champlain, founder of Quebec, discovered Lake Champlain and came upon a band of Iroquois (1609), some of his men fired. Terrified by their first experience with guns, the Indians fled. Thus began a historic enmity between the Iroquois and the French. The anti-French feeling of the Iroquois persist-

ed because the Iroquois as middlemen resented the competition of the French in the fur trade. For many years the Iroquois were to look upon their English customers as allies.

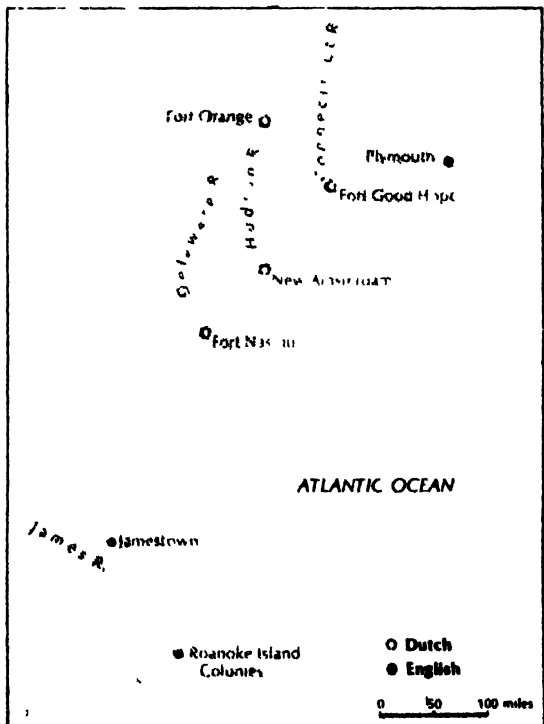
Besides the Spaniards and the Frenchmen, the English were soon to find in the New World another European rival, the Dutch. Shortly after the planting of the first two English colonies, at Jamestown and Plymouth, the Dutch began to wedge themselves in between, when the Dutch West India Company established posts on the Hudson, Delaware, and Connecticut rivers.

## The First English Settlements

The English colonies in America did not result from deliberate governmental planning. They originated in a variety of responses to the economic changes and religious and political struggles going on in England at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century. England was advancing out of feudalism and into capitalism faster than any other country. Her colonization was essentially a business enterprise, a product of the new age. But it was motivated by ideals of a better life as well as by the search for power and profit

them back before they had crossed the ocean. Gilbert waited five years while he sought to raise enough money to try again. Then, in 1583, he sailed with a second and smaller expedition, reached Newfoundland, and took possession of

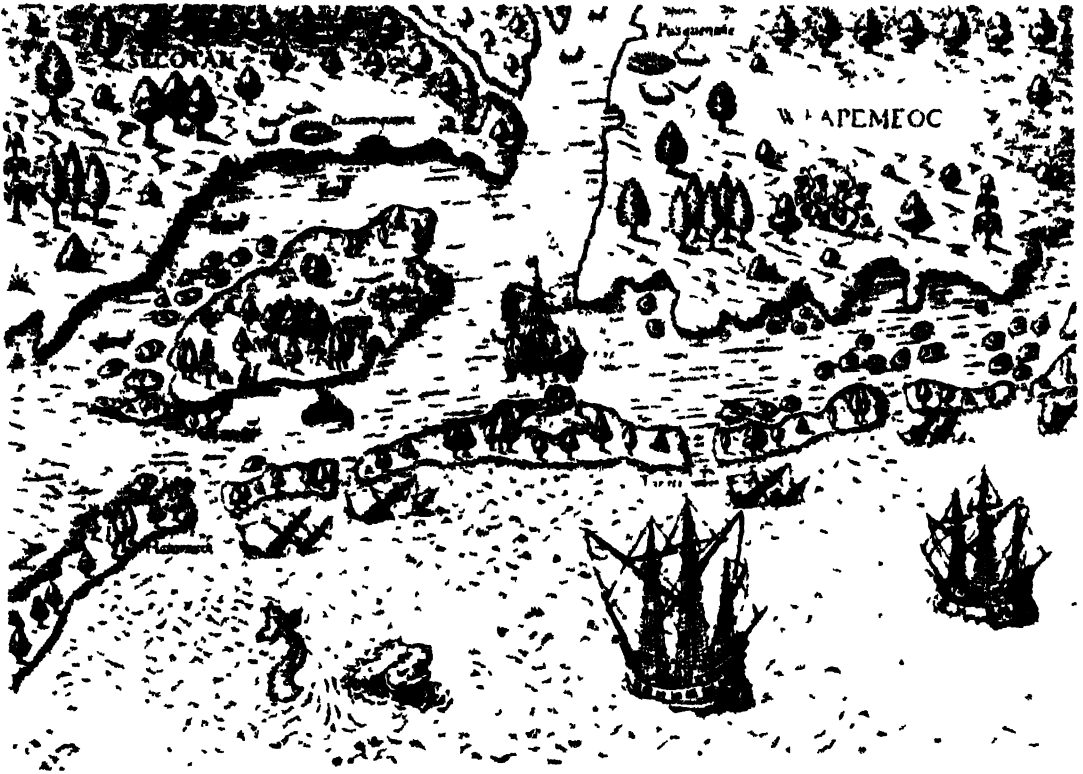
### Early English and Dutch Settlements, About 1630



### EARLY ATTEMPTS

The pioneers of English colonization were Sir Humphrey Gilbert and his half-brother Sir Walter Raleigh, though neither of them succeeded in founding a permanent colony. Both were friends of Queen Elizabeth. While Drake and other sea dogs were harrying the Spaniards in the New World and on the high seas, Gilbert kept insisting at court that English bases in America would give still greater opportunities for sapping the power of Spain. In 1578 he obtained from Elizabeth a patent conferring upon him, for six years, the exclusive right "to inhabit and possess at his choice all remote and heathen lands not in the actual possession of any Christian prince."

That same year Gilbert and Raleigh, with seven ships and nearly 400 men, set out to establish a base in the New World. Storms turned



#### Arrival at Roanoke

John White, a skilful painter, sailed with the first colonizing expedition to Roanoke Island in 1585. He recorded the country and its inhabitants in a series of pictures which Thomas Harriot, another member of the expedition, published in a *Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. The illustration reproduced above was entitled *The Arrival of the Englishmen*. It shows the sheltered position of Roanoke Island behind the Outer Banks of the North Carolina coast. After the failure of the first colonizing attempt, White went to Roanoke as governor of the second colony in 1587. Returning to England for supplies, he was unable to get back to Roanoke again until 1590. He then could find no trace of the colonists, including his daughter and his granddaughter, *Virginia Dare*.

it in the Queen's name. He proceeded southward along the coast, looking for a good place to build a military outpost that might eventually grow into a profitable colony, of which he would be proprietor. Once more a storm defeated him; this time his ship sank and he was lost at sea.

The next year Raleigh, securing from Elizabeth a six-year grant similar to Gilbert's, sent out men to look over the American coast. They returned with two Indians and with glowing reports of an island the natives called Roanoke, and of its environs (in what is now North Caro-

lina). With her permission Raleigh named the area "Virginia" in honor of Elizabeth, the "Virgin Queen." He expected financial aid in return, but she said she could not afford it. So he had to raise money from private investors to finance another voyage to Roanoke. The hundred men he sent out in 1585 spent a year in America, exploring as far north as Chesapeake Bay, which they recommended as the best location for a settlement.

In 1587 Raleigh sponsored still another expedition, this one carrying ninety-one men, seventeen women (two of them pregnant), and



hundred miles wide and a hundred miles deep. The settlers themselves were to retain all the "liberties, franchises, and immunities" that belonged to Englishmen at home.

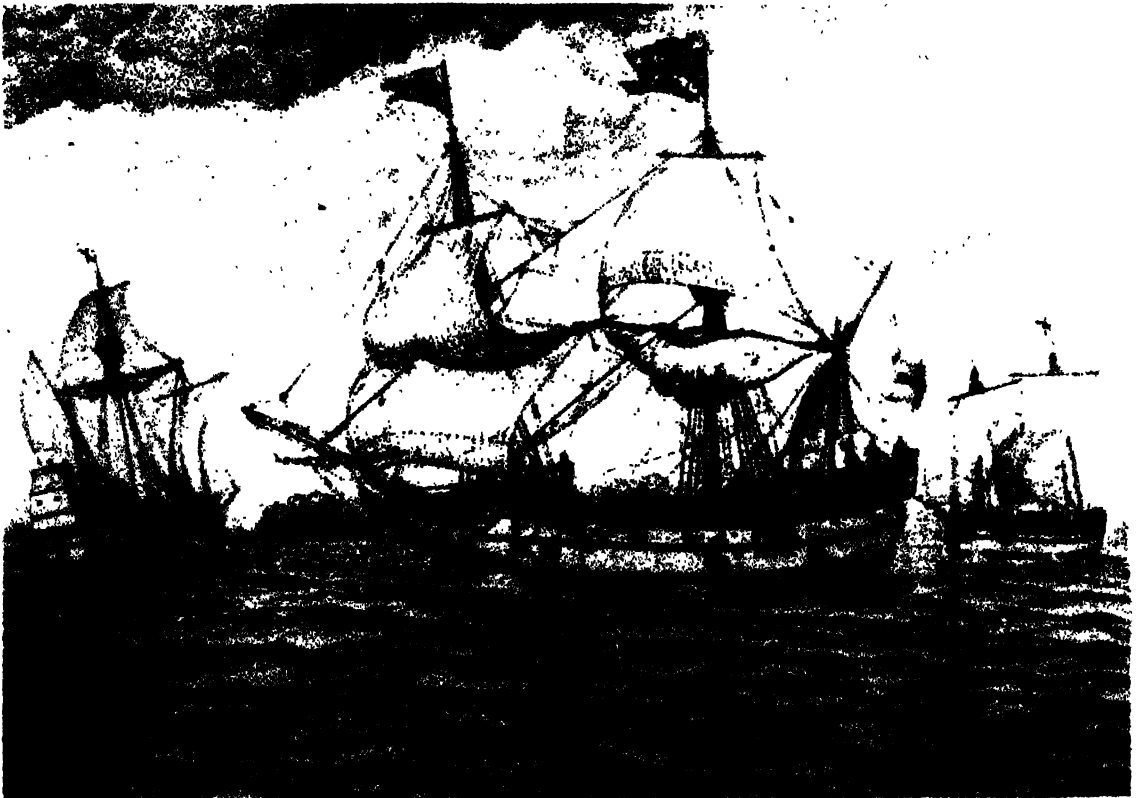
Through the efforts of the London Company (or Virginia Company of London, its full name), the first enduring English colony was about to be planted in America. The merchants, taking the East India Company as their model, intended at the outset to found not an agricultural settlement but a trading post. To it they expected to send English manufactures for barter with the Indians, and from it they hoped to bring back American commodities procured in exchange or produced by the labor of their own employees.

## JAMESTOWN AND VIRGINIA

The London Company's first expedition of three small ships (the *Godspeed*, the *Discovery*, and the *Sarah Constant*), with about 100 men, the survivors among 144 who had embarked from England, sailed into Chesapeake Bay and up the James River in the spring of 1607. The men had instructions from the company to avoid the mistakes of Roanoke and pick an easily defended site well inland and on high ground. They disembarked and began to build a palisaded town — which, like the river, they named for their King — at a point that seemed to meet most of the requirements. But the place

### The First Ships at Jamestown

*The Godspeed, the Discovery, and the Sarah Constant prepare to anchor in the James River, 1607. These double-decked, three-masted ships were similar in size and shape to the Mayflower and other English merchantmen of the time. They were less than one hundred feet long and provided extremely close quarters for passengers, crew, equipment, and cargo. From a pencil study for a painting in the Virginia State Capitol, Richmond. (The Mariners Museum, Newport News, Va.)*





west and northwest"). In the spring of 1609 the company sent off to Virginia a "great fleet" of nine vessels with about 600 men, women, and children aboard.

Disaster followed. One of the Virginia-bound ships sank in a hurricane, and another ran aground on the island of Bermuda. Many of those who reached Jamestown, still weak from their long and stormy voyage, succumbed to fevers before winter came. That winter of 1609–1610 turned into a "starving time" worse than anything before. While Indians killed off the livestock in the woods and kept the settlers within the palisade, these unfortunates were reduced to eating "dogs, cats, rats, snakes, toadstools, horsehides," and even the "corpses of dead men," as one survivor recalled. When the migrants who had been stranded on Bermuda arrived at Jamestown the following May, they found about 60 scarcely human wretches still alive (there had been nearly 500 people there the previous summer). No one could see much point in staying, and soon all were on their way downriver, leaving the town to its decay.

Yet the colony was to begin again. The refugees met a relief ship coming up the river and were persuaded to go back to Jamestown. This ship was part of a fleet bringing supplies and the colony's first governor, Lord De La Warr. He reestablished the settlement and imposed strict discipline, then went home on account of illness, while new relief expeditions with hundreds of colonists began to arrive. De La Warr's successors Thomas Dale and Thomas Gates continued his harsh rule, sentencing offenders to be flogged, hanged, or broken on the wheel. Under Dale and Gates the colony spread, with new settlements lining the river above and below Jamestown. The communal system of labor was not functioning very well, for despite the governors' strictness the lazy often evaded work, "presuming that howsoever the harvest prospered, the general store must maintain them." Before the seven years of the system were up, Dale changed it to allow the private ownership and cultivation of land, in return for part-time work for the company and contributions of grain to its storehouse. Meanwhile the cultivators were discovering, in tobacco, a saleable crop.

Tobacco had come into use in Europe soon after Columbus' first return from the West Indies, where he had seen the Cuban natives

smoking small cigars (*tabacos*), which they inserted in the nostril. In England Sir Walter Raleigh popularized the smoking habit, and the demand for tobacco soared despite objections on both hygienic and economic grounds. Some critics denounced it as a poisonous weed, the cause of many diseases. King James I himself led the attack with *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (1604), in which he urged his people not to imitate "the barbarous and beastly manners of the wild, godless, and slavish Indians, especially in so vile and stinking a custom." Other critics were concerned because England's tobacco imports came from the Spanish colonies and resulted in the loss of English gold. In 1612 the Jamestown planter John Rolfe began to experiment with the West Indian plant. It grew well in Virginia soil and, though rated less desirable than the Spanish-grown, found ready buyers in England. Tobacco cultivation quickly spread up and down the James.

When the seven-year communal period was up (1616), the company had no profits to divide, but only land and debts. Still, the promoters were rather optimistic because of their success with tobacco. In 1618 they launched a last great campaign to attract settlers and make the colony profitable. They offered a "headright" of fifty acres to anyone who paid his own or someone else's passage to Virginia, and another fifty for each additional migrant whose way he paid. Thus a wealthy man could send or take servants to work for him and receive, in turn, a sizable plantation. The company expected to add to its income by charging the headright landholder a small quitrent (one shilling a year for every fifty acres). Old investors and settlers were given grants of one hundred acres apiece. To make life in the colony more attractive, the company promised the colonists the rights of Englishmen (as provided in the original charter of 1606), an end to the strict and arbitrary rule, and even a share in self-government. To diversify the colonial economy, the company undertook to transport ironworkers and other skilled craftsmen to Virginia.

On July 30, 1619, in the Jamestown church, delegates from the various communities met as the House of Burgesses to consider, along with the governor and his council, the enactment of laws for the colony. This was a bright example for the future—the first meeting of an elected legislature, a representative assembly, within

what was to become the United States. A month later there occurred in Virginia another event with a far less happy outcome. As John Rolfe recorded, "about the latter end of August" a Dutch ship brought in "20 and odd Negroes." These black persons were bought, it seems, not as slaves but as servants to be held for a term of years and then freed, like the white servants with whom the planters already were familiar. In any case, a start had been made toward the enslavement of Africans with in what was to be the American republic.

For several years the Indians had given the Virginia colonists little trouble. A kind of truce had resulted from the capture of the great chief Powhatan's daughter Pocahontas and her marriage (1614) to John Rolfe. Going with her husband on a visit to England, Pocahontas as a Christian convert and a gracious lady stirred up interest in projects to civilize the Indians. She died while abroad. Then Powhatan also died, and his brother Opechancanough replaced him as head of the native confederacy. Under Opechancanough the Indians pretended to be friendly while he laid plans to eliminate the English intruders. On a March morning in 1622 the tribesmen called on the white settlements as if to offer goods for sale, then suddenly turned to killing and were not stopped until 347 whites of both sexes and all ages, including Rolfe, lay dead or dying. The surviving Englishmen struck back with merciless revenge and gave up all thought of civilizing the aborigines.

The massacre came as a final blow to the London Company, which soon faced bankruptcy. In 1624 James I revoked the company's charter and took control of the colony. By that time the white population of Virginia was less than 1,300; thousands more had come over, but most of these had died and many had gone back to England. Still, the remaining colonists had a cash crop, a representative government (which was to continue), and a hope for future growth and prosperity. Though a failure as a profit-making enterprise, Virginia was at last succeeding as a colonizing venture.

## PLYMOUTH PLANTATION

While the London Company was starting the colonization of Jamestown, the Plymouth Company attempted to found a colony far to

the north, at the mouth of the Kennebec River (on the coast of what is now Maine), but in a year the surviving colonists returned to England. The Plymouth Company made no further effort to colonize. The most it did was to send Captain John Smith, after his return from Jamestown, to look over its territory. He drew a map of the area, wrote an enthusiastic pamphlet about it, and named it "New England." Eventually the Plymouth merchants reorganized as the Council for New England and, with a new, sea-to-sea land grant from the King, proceeded to deal in real estate on a tremendous scale.

The first enduring settlement in New England—the second in English America—resulted from the discontent of a congregation of Puritan Separatists. From time to time Separatists had been imprisoned and even executed for persisting in their defiance of the government and the Church of England. A band of them in the hamlet of Scrooby looked to Holland as a country where they might worship as they pleased, though it was against the law to leave the realm without the King's consent. Slipping away a few at a time, members of the Scrooby congregation crossed the English Channel and began their lives anew in Holland. Here they were allowed to meet and hold their services without interference. But, as aliens, they were not allowed to join the Dutch guilds of craftsmen, and so they had to work long and hard at unskilled and poorly paid jobs. They were further troubled as their children began to speak Dutch, marry into Dutch families, and lose their Englishness. Some of the Puritans decided to move again, this time across the Atlantic, where they might find opportunity for happier living and also for spreading "the gospel of the Kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world."

Leaders of this group got permission from the London Company to settle as an independent community with land of its own in Virginia. They tried, and failed, to get from James I a guarantee of religious freedom, but they were assured that he would "not molest them, provided they carried themselves peaceably." This was a historic concession on the part of the King, for it opened English America to settlement by dissenting Protestants. The next step was to arrange financing for the voyage. Several English merchants agreed to advance the necessary funds, on the condition that a

## The Mayflower Compact [1620]

*In the name of God, Amen We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Brittain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith &c Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first colony in the northern Parts of Virginia Do by these presents, solemnly and mutually in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid, And by Virtue hereof do enact constitute, and frame such just and equal Laws Ordinances Acts Constitutions, and Offices, from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience*

communal plan like that of Jamestown be put into effect, with the merchants to share the profits at the end of seven years.

The migrating Puritans "knew they were pilgrims" when they left Holland, their leader and historian William Bradford later wrote. The sailing from Plymouth was delayed, and it was not until September that the *Mayflower*, with thirty-five "saints" (Puritan Separatists) and sixty-seven "strangers" aboard, finally put out to sea. Their destination was probably the mouth of the Hudson River, in the northeast corner of the London Company's Virginia grant, but when they sighted Cape Cod in November, it was too late in the year to go on. After reconnoitering, they chose a site in an area that John Smith had labeled "Plymouth" on his map. Since this lay outside the London Company's territory, they would be without a government once ashore, and some of the "strangers" began to show a lawless spirit. One of the "saints" therefore drew up an agreement, which forty-one of the passengers signed. This Mayflower Compact was like the church covenant by which the Separatists formed congregations, except that it set up a civil government, and it professed allegiance to the King. Then, December 21, 1620, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

Here they settled on cleared land that had been an Indian village until, several years earlier, an epidemic swept the place. During the first winter half of the colonists perished from scurvy and exposure, but the rest managed to put the colony on its feet. Among the neighboring Indians, whose military power had been

weakened by the recent plague, the Pilgrims discovered friends – Squanto, Samoset, Massasoit – who showed them how to obtain seafood and cultivate corn. After the first harvest the settlers invited the Indians to join them in an October festival, the original Thanksgiving. They could not aspire to rich farms on the sandy and marshy soil, but they soon developed a profitable trade in fish and furs. From time to time new colonists arrived from England, and in a decade the population reached the modest total of 300.

The people of "Plymouth Plantation" elected their own governor, and they chose the great-hearted William Bradford again and again. As early as 1621 he cleared their land title with a patent from the Council for New England, but he never succeeded in his efforts to secure a royal charter giving them indisputable rights of government. Terminating the communal labor plan ahead of schedule, the governor distributed land among the families, thus making "all hands very industrious." He and a group of fellow "undertakers" assumed the colony's debt to its financiers in England and, with earnings from the fur trade, finally paid it off, even though the financiers had not lived up to their agreement to keep on sending supplies.

The Pilgrims remained poor; as late as the 1640s they had only one plow among them. Yet they clung to the belief that God had put them in the New World for a reason. Governor Bradford wrote in retrospect: "As one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone to many, yea in some sort to our whole nation."



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# Transplanted Englishmen





## Two

The colonists who came to English America in the seventeenth century were transplanted Englishmen. They had no desire to lose their Englishness. Rather, they hoped to build in the New World a better England, one that would be free from the imperfections of their native land, one that would give them greater opportunities for personal happiness. They disagreed among themselves as to what was good and what was bad at home. Depending on their religion and their station in life, they saw their fortunes and prospects in England rising or falling as one side or the other gained the upper hand in a long continuing struggle between King and Parliament.

King James I died in 1625, before actually coming to blows with Parliament, but his son Charles I was more extreme in his autocratic tendencies and in his Roman Catholic sympathies. From 1629 to 1640, Charles I ruled as an absolute monarch, refusing to call Parliament into session, imposing high-church forms upon the people, and imprisoning Puritan leaders. Finally he called Parliament because he needed money and hoped the members would vote taxes for him. This "Long Parliament" remained in session almost twenty years.

During that time, civil war broke out between the King's followers—the Cavaliers, and the Parliament forces—the Roundheads, who were largely Puritans. After Charles I had been defeated and beheaded, the stern Roundhead leader Oliver Cromwell governed England as "Protector" from 1649 until his death in 1658. There was no strong man to succeed him, and after his son had been Protector for less than a year, the Protectorate came to an end.

In 1660 the Stuart dynasty was restored. Parliament accepted Charles II as King on the condition that he govern in partnership with its members and not in the high-handed way of his father and grandfather. The handsome and debonair Charles II, tired of his travels in exile, desired above all to stay in England and keep

### Earliest Known View of Manhattan

*At what is now the Battery, in New York City, on the southern tip of Manhattan Island, the Dutch built a fort, a large windmill, and a number of houses during the 1620s, as shown in this contemporary Dutch drawing. (Stokes Collection, New York Public Library)*

his throne. His less clever brother James II, who succeeded him in 1685, appointed Catholics to high office and attempted to dictate to Parliament and the courts. He quickly lost popular support.

James II fled to France without resisting, when Parliament offered the throne to his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange, ruler of the Netherlands

and Protestant champion of Europe. William and Mary became joint sovereigns of England in 1688. By this "Glorious Revolution" the long struggle between King and Parliament was finally settled in Parliament's favor.

These events of seventeenth century England form an essential part of the background of colonization during the period when most of her American colonies were founded.

## New England

New England from the 1620s to the 1670s took its character as a colony in part from the Pilgrims who settled at Plymouth, but in a much larger measure from the Puritans who later landed at nearby Massachusetts Bay and then spread out from there. These Puritans would have liked to remake the institutions of England, but they faced too much opposition there. In the wilderness of America they saw an opportunity to create society anew.

### MASSACHUSETTS BAY

Englishmen were first attracted to Massachusetts Bay by its fisheries, and as early as 1623 a group of merchants tried to set up a permanent

fishing and trading post on Cape Ann. Some of the settlers later moved to Salem. In 1628 another group of merchants—Puritans—obtained from the Council for New England a grant of land lying between the Merrimac and Charles rivers and extending from sea to sea. These wealthy Puritans bought the equipment of the defunct fishing and trading business and sent to Salem a ship with supplies and forty passengers to lay the groundwork for a large settlement. In 1629 the new enterprisers organized the Massachusetts Bay Company, secured a royal charter confirming their land grant and giving the company the right to govern its colony, and sent out nearly 400 additional settlers.

Some members of the company, alarmed by the high-church and anti-Parliament atti-

### The Tenth Muse [1650]

The first woman poet in America was Anne Bradstreet, who had come to Massachusetts Bay in 1630, and whose husband served for a time as the colony's governor. Mrs. Bradstreet wrote more than seven thousand lines of verse. Much of it is didactic and dull (though no more so than the poetry of her male contemporaries). The amazing thing is that she managed to write at all, considering the hardships of colonial life: the eight children she had to care for, and the prevailing view that a woman ought to confine herself to household duties. She became famous as "The Tenth Muse" after her first collection of poems, under that title, was published in London (1650). Nevertheless, she felt the antifeminist prejudice of the time as she indicated in the following lines:

*I am obnoxious to each carping tongue  
Who says my hand a needle better fits,  
A poet's pen all scorn I should thus wrong,  
For such despite they cast on female wits:  
If what I do prove well, it won't advance,  
They'll say it's stol'n, or else it was by chance.*

tudes of the new King, Charles I, were beginning to look upon the colony less as a business venture and more as a Puritan refuge. Some were eager to migrate themselves if they could do so and still control the company. They arranged to buy the stock of those who preferred to stay at home. Then, in 1630, they sailed under the lead of the company's governor, John Winthrop, a gentleman of means, with a university education, a deep but narrow piety, a cool and calculating way, and a remarkably forceful and stubborn character. The expedition, with seventeen ships and 1,000 people, was the largest of its kind in the seventeenth century. These colonists founded a number of new towns, among them Boston, which was to be both the company's headquarters and the colony's capital.

The Massachusetts Bay Company soon was transformed into the Massachusetts colonial government. Governor Winthrop brought with him the company charter. According to its terms, the "freemen" (the stockholders) were to meet as a General Court to choose officers and adopt rules for the corporation. After their arrival in America the freemen proceeded to elect officials and pass laws for the colony. At their first meeting the freemen, eight of them, voted to concentrate power in their own and the governor's hands. At their next meeting, in 1631, they increased the number of freemen (the word now meaning voters or citizens, not necessarily stockholders) by more than a hundred, so as to include about half of the family heads in the colony at that time. Governor Winthrop continued to dominate colonial politics, but in 1634 he agreed to an arrangement by which the freemen would elect from year to year the governor, the deputy governor, the council of governor's assistants, and two "deputies" from each town—all of whom would constitute the General Court. In 1644 this became a bicameral legislature, with a lower House of Deputies and an upper chamber consisting of the governor and his council.

To be a freeman, to take any part in the colonial government, a man had to be a member of the Puritan Church. This was not easy. The Puritans in England (and the Pilgrims in Plymouth) had required for church membership only that a person profess the faith, sign the covenant, and live an upright life. The Puritans in Massachusetts, however, soon began to

limit membership to the "visible saints," that is, to those who could demonstrate that they had experienced God's saving grace and hence belonged to the elect, the group whom He had chosen for eventual salvation. Churches were formed by persons covenanting with one another and with God, and these members, once in, decided who else could enter the fold. Whether admitted to membership or not, everyone in the community was a part of the congregation and was required by law to attend religious services.

Unlike the Separatist founders of Plymouth, the Puritan founders of Massachusetts had come with no intention of breaking away from the Church of England. They only wished, at first, to rescue the Church from what they saw as the evil influence of Rome. Nevertheless, they soon were acting as if they were religiously independent. As the prominent preacher John Cotton said, the Church in every town had "complete liberty to stand alone." Each congregation chose its own minister and regulated its own affairs. Thus there arose in Massachusetts—as well as in Plymouth—what came to be known as the Congregational Church.

These Massachusetts Puritans were not necessarily grim, joyless, or "puritanical," despite their belief in predestination. They enjoyed the ordinary pleasures of life, and they appreciated beauty in plain and simple forms. They strove to lead a useful, conscientious life of thrift and hard work. They honored material success, for if a person did well it was possible evidence that God favored him as one of the elect. If his ways were upright, this was another possible indication of divine grace. Many were hopeful that they were among the chosen, but no one could be entirely sure. So people searched their hearts, and those of their neighbors so far as possible, to look for signs of salvation.

"We here enjoy God and Jesus Christ," Winthrop wrote to his wife soon after his arrival; "is this not enough?" He and the other Massachusetts founders saw themselves as starting a holy commonwealth, a model for the corrupt world to see. The problem was to keep it holy. In this effort the preachers and the politicians worked together. The ministers did not run the government, but they supported it, and they exerted great influence upon the church mem-

bers who alone could vote or hold office in it. The government in turn protected the ministers, taxed the people (members and nonmembers alike) to support the Church, and enforced the law requiring attendance at services. In this Puritan oligarchy the dissidents had no more freedom of worship than the Puritans themselves had had in England.

The Lord seemed to smile upon the Massachusetts enterprise. After the first winter (1629–1630), when nearly 200 died and many others decided to leave, the colony grew and prospered. The nearby Pilgrims helped with food and advice. Incoming settlers, many of them well-to-do, brought needed tools and other goods, which they exchanged for the cattle, corn, and other produce of the established colonists. During the 1630s, while Charles I ruled England without a Parliament, Puritans escaping from his tyranny migrated in such numbers that by 1643 the colony had a population of about 15,000. Then, during the war against King and Cavaliers, quite a few of the colonists went back to aid the Puritan cause at home, and for a while those returning to England outnumbered those newly arriving in Massachusetts.

### EXODUS FROM THE BAY COLONY

Meanwhile, an outpouring from Massachusetts Bay to various parts of New England (and to other places in English America) had begun. This exodus was motivated generally by one or both of two considerations: the unproductiveness of the stony soil around Boston, and the oppressiveness of the Massachusetts government. Not all the incoming settlers were saints, and as the population increased, the proportion of those who could vote or hold office declined. To the Puritan authorities, opposition to their Church seemed like a threat to the government, like both heresy and treason. Independent thinkers—and Puritanism somehow bred them—had little choice but to give in or get out. Such thinkers were responsible for new settlements north and south, in New Hampshire and Rhode Island. Families seeking richer lands as well as greater religious and political independence began new settlements in the west, in Connecticut.

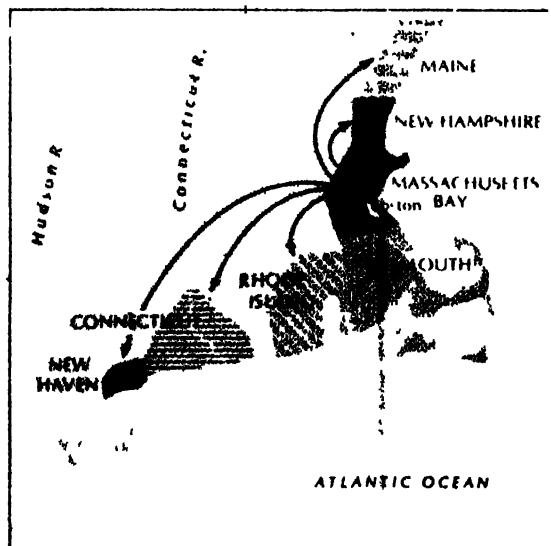
The Connecticut Valley, one hundred miles beyond the settled frontier, contained

fertile meadows that invited pioneering despite the presence of warlike Indians and the claims of the already fortified Dutch. By the early 1630s a few Englishmen were already living there. Well up the river was a post that Pilgrims going out from Plymouth had founded. Near the river's mouth was the post of Saybrook, started by a group of English Puritans who had a large though vague land grant from the Council for New England.

The Connecticut Valley appealed to Thomas Hooker, a minister of Newtown (Cambridge), who questioned the fairness of government by the General Court, arguing that "a general council, chosen by all," would be "most suitable to rule and most safe for the relief of the whole people." When, in 1634, Newtown petitioned the General Court for permission to occupy the Connecticut Valley before it was "possessed by others," Governor Winthrop and his associates turned down the request. In 1635 a number of families from other Massachusetts towns moved west with the General Court's approval, on the understanding that they would "continue still under this government." The next year Hooker led his congregation through the wilds and established the town of Hartford.

Disregarding the claims of the Dutch, the English grantees, and the Massachusetts General Court, the people of Hartford and two other newly founded upriver towns, Windsor

### Colonies That Grew Out of Massachusetts Bay



## **The New England Confederation [1643]**

*The said United Colonies [Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven] for themselves and their posterities do jointly and severally hereby enter into a firm and perpetual league of friendship and amity for offence and defence, mutual advice and succor upon all just occasions both for preserving and propagating the truth and liberties of the Gospel and for their own mutual safety and welfare.*

The United Colonies further agreed:

- 1 To provide men and provisions and to share in all costs in proportion to their abilities
- 2 To send immediate aid to any of their confederates that might be invaded or in danger
- 3 To appoint two commissioners apiece for managing the affairs of the confederation
- 4 To begin no war, and to involve the confederation in no war, without the consent of at least six of the eight commissioners

and Wethersfield, decided to set up a colonial government of their own. In 1639 they adopted a kind of constitution known as the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. This provided for a government similar to that of Massachusetts Bay, but gave a larger proportion of the people the right to vote and hold office.

A separate colony, the project of a Puritan minister and a wealthy merchant from England, grew up around New Haven on the Connecticut coast. The Fundamental Articles of New Haven (1639) set up a Bible-based government even stricter than that of Massachusetts Bay. Eventually the governor of Connecticut obtained a royal charter (1662) that not only authorized his colony but also extended its jurisdiction over the New Haven settlements.

Rhode Island had its origin in the religious dissent of Roger Williams, a likeable but troublesome young minister of Massachusetts Bay. Even John Winthrop, who considered him a heretic, called Williams a "sweet and amiable" man, and William Bradford described him thus: "A man godly and zealous, having many precious parts, but very unsettled in judgement." Williams was an extreme Separatist who at first advocated not religious freedom but rather a church made even more pure and strict. Making friends with the neighboring Indians, he concluded that the land belonged to them and not to the King or to the Massachusetts Bay Company. The colonial government, considering Williams a dangerous man, decided to deport him, but he escaped. He took ref-

uge with Narragansett tribesmen during a bitter winter, then bought a tract of land from them and in 1636, with a few of his friends, created the town of Providence on it.

By that time another menace to the established order had appeared in Massachusetts Bay. Anne Hutchinson, the charming and strongminded wife of a substantial Bostonian, attracted many more followers than Williams with her heretical doctrine that the Holy Spirit dwelled within and guided every true believer. If this were so, the Bible would have no more authority than anyone's personal revelation, and both the church and the government would be exposed to anarchy, or so it seemed to Governor Winthrop and his associates. Mrs. Hutchinson's followers were numerous and influential enough to prevent Winthrop's reelection as governor in 1636, but the next year he got back into office and set the orthodox ministers to proving that she was a heretic. In 1638, after a trial at which Winthrop himself presided, she was convicted of sedition and banished as "a woman not fit for our society." With her family and some of her followers she moved to a point on Narragansett Bay not far from Providence.

In time other communities of dissidents arose in that vicinity. They quarreled with one another and with Roger Williams, who, having paid the Indians for the land, looked upon himself as its proprietor. As he matured he modified some of his views on religion. He began to advocate complete freedom of worship and

absolute separation of church and state. Eventually he turned into a "seeker," one who respected but doubted all religions while he sought the true one. Rhode Island reflected his changing ideas. In 1644 he got from Parliament a charter authorizing a government for the combined settlements. The government, though based on the Massachusetts pattern, did not restrict the vote to church members nor did it tax the people for church support. A royal charter of 1663 confirmed the existing arrangement and added a guarantee of "liberty in religious concerns."

New Hampshire and Maine had become the separate possessions of two proprietors, Captain John Mason and Sir Ferdinando Gorges. In 1629 they divided their grant from the Council for New England along the Piscataqua River. Despite lavish promotional efforts, especially on the part of Gorges, few settlers were drawn to these northern regions until the religious disruption of Massachusetts Bay. In 1639 John Wheelwright, a disciple of Anne Hutchinson, led some of his fellow heretics to Exeter, in New Hampshire. Thereafter a number of towns in that province and in Maine were peopled by orthodox and unorthodox Puritans from Massachusetts or by new colonists from abroad. The Massachusetts Bay Company extended its authority over the whole territory in the north but ultimately lost its cases against the heirs of both Mason and Gorges in the highest courts of England. New Hampshire was then set up as a separate colony in 1679. The Gorges family having sold their rights to it, Maine remained a part of Massachusetts until admitted to the Union as a state in 1820.

## FRONTIER DEFENSE

As New England spread, the settlers ran into trouble with the Indians. With a few exceptions like Roger Williams and John Eliot, a saintly missionary who translated the Bible into an Indian language, the Puritans viewed the red men as "pernicious creatures" who deserved extermination unless they would adopt the white man's ways. In 1637 the exasperated Pequots went on the warpath in the Connecticut Valley. The Connecticut frontiersmen marched against a palisaded Pequot stronghold and set it afire. About 400 Indians were

burned to death or killed when trying to escape, and most of the survivors were hunted down, captured, and sold as slaves. The Pequot tribe was almost wiped out.

The New England colonies faced danger not only from the Indians but also from the Dutch and the French, who claimed the territory on which some of the outlying settlements were made. The colonies could not expect help from England at the time when the mother country was distracted by the civil war between Cavaliers and Roundheads. To provide frontier protection, to adjust boundary disputes among themselves, and to further their mutual interests in other ways, four of the colonies joined to form "The Confederation of the United Colonies of New England" (1643). These four were Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven. The other settlements—those of Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Maine—were excluded, since Massachusetts aspired to annex them and objected to recognizing them as equals.

By 1675, when King Philip's War began, the New England Confederation had deteriorated so much that it could no longer be relied upon for organizing frontier defense. King Philip and the Wampanoags, with their Indian allies, destroyed or depopulated twenty towns and caused the deaths of a sixteenth of the white male population in three years of gloom and terror for New England. The war did not end until Massachusetts had called upon the aid of "praying" Indians, thousands of whom John Eliot and other missionaries had converted and who had settled down in or near the white man's towns. One of these Indians shot and killed King Philip. Other leaders were executed after their surrender, and many warriors again were sold into slavery (in the West Indies), but danger still remained. The French, who had given little aid to King Philip's hosts, were later to back the Indians in revengeful attacks upon the New England frontier.

## CHANGING WAYS

In New England the early settlers almost always took up land in groups. A congregation arriving from England received from the General Court the grant of a town (township), an area of twenty-five square miles or so. Its distribution was left to the leaders of the new settle-



ment. They laid out a village, in which they set aside a "common" as pasture and timberland, chose a site for a meeting house (church) and for a fort, and assigned each family a strip of land as a home lot on either side of the one village street. They also divided up the outlying fields in the town, the size of a field and the desirability of its location depending on the family's numbers, wealth, and social standing. Wherever he went to work his fields, the typical seventeenth-century New Englander lived not in a lonely farmhouse but in a village with neighbors close by, and he maintained a strong sense of community.

Once established, the town was left to go pretty much its own way, with little interference from the colonial government except in cases where the townspeople could not agree among themselves. They held a yearly "town meeting" in the meeting house to decide important local questions and to choose a group of "selectmen" who governed the town until the next general gathering. The town meeting itself decided who could participate in its sessions and who was eligible for election to a town office. As a rule it qualified all adult males, even in Massachusetts, instead of limiting the local suffrage to church members. The town (not the county) was the basic unit of local government.

One thing the Massachusetts government attempted to require of the towns was provision for education. An early statute called upon parents to see to their children's "ability to read and understand the principles of religion and the capital laws of the country." A law of 1647—designed to circumvent "that old deluder Satan"—required each town of fifty householders to hire a schoolmaster to teach reading and writing, and each town of one hundred householders to set up a Latin grammar school (high school). Connecticut adopted somewhat similar legislation. The laws could not always be enforced, especially in the frontier settlements, which often preferred paying a fine to undergoing the expense of maintaining schools.

The villagers were fairly self-sufficient, producing most of what they consumed. They needed crops, however, that they could sell or exchange for goods they could not themselves produce. They experimented unsuccessfully with hemp, wine grapes, and sassafras (then in demand abroad as a supposed cure for syphilis). Some trapped or traded for furs, and others

set up sawmills, both furs and lumber being valuable items for export. The Massachusetts government helped to promote an iron furnace at Saugus, to lessen the need for imports by making possible the colonial manufacture of pots, kettles, plows, and guns. This experiment lasted only from 1652 to 1676.

Coastal towns meanwhile developed an overseas trade through fishing, shipping, shipbuilding, and related enterprises. For New England, the ocean proved more productive than the land. Locally built vessels soon were busy taking ship's timbers and naval stores to England, fish to Spain, and lumber products and African slaves to the West Indies; in return they brought back sugar and a variety of manufactured goods. Since money was scarce, imports were commonly bartered for domestic products. Massachusetts, alone among all the English colonies, minted a coin of its own, the "pine-tree shilling," but only for about three decades (1652–1684).

With the growth of commerce, the colonial shipowning merchants came to dominate the New England economy. Some of these merchants diversified their holdings, investing part of their profits in timberlands, sawmills, shipyards, rum distilleries, and properties of various kinds. The rich businessmen might be good Puritans—though many were not—and yet their way to wealth inevitably created tensions within Puritan society. Such men looked outward to the world of the Atlantic, and their activities brought in sophisticated, cosmopolitan attitudes as well as exotic commodities. These activities changed New England life, especially in the port towns. Here dwelled not only the merchants in their mansions but also the upstart blacksmiths, carpenters, and other artisans who demanded and got higher and higher pay for their indispensable skills. The ports were overrun, besides, with rowdy sailors and longshoremen and with the gaudy women who catered to them. Old and orthodox Puritans resented the changes taking place, and at the same time the rising merchants longed for further changes of a kind that would give them a greater voice in colonial government.

The Puritan oligarchy gradually lost some of its political power, even in Massachusetts, and the ministers lost some of their authority, while the merchants gained in influence. John Winthrop, the dominant figure of early Massachusetts and most of the time its governor, died

## Day of Doom [1662]

The earliest book-publishing centers in English America were Cambridge and Boston. From their presses came more than two hundred titles between 1640 and 1700. The very first of these was *The Whole Book of Psalms*, popularly known as the "Bay Psalm Book." Another best seller, published in 1662 and reprinted many times thereafter, was *The Day of Doom, Or a Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgment*, written by Michael Wigglesworth, a Harvard graduate and Puritan divine. Two of its 224 dreary stanzas describe the eternal punishment of the damned as follows:

*Whom having brought, as they are taught,  
unto the brink of Hell,  
(That dismal place far from Christ's face  
where Death and Darkness dwell,  
Where God's fierce ire kindleth the fire,  
and vengeance feeds the flame  
With piles of Wood, and Brimstone Flood,  
that none can quench the same.)*

*With Iron bands they bind their hands  
and cursed feet together,  
And cast them all, both great and small,  
into that Lake for ever,  
Where day and night, without respite,  
they wail, and cry, and howl  
For tort'ring pain which they sustain  
in Body and in Soul*

in 1649. As he and others of the first generation of American Puritans passed away, the number of church members declined, for few of the second generation could show the saving grace that church membership required.

The Puritans faced a dilemma. If they continued to admit no one except "visible saints," the Church would go on shrinking, but if they opened the door to others, the Church would lose its purity. To meet this problem, the Puritans allowed the children of saints to be baptized as partial members even without proof of a conversion experience. But what about the unconverted children of these partial members? By the Half-Way Covenant, which a conference of ministers approved in 1662, such men and women of the third generation were given the right to be baptized, though not the right to partake of communion or vote in church affairs. As time passed, the difference between full and half membership was forgotten, and in most communities the Congregational Church came to include all who cared to join and could profess the faith. As the number of church members rose, so did the number of

men who could take part in colonial politics as voters and officeholders.

Orthodox Puritans continued to oppose the transformation that was coming over the erstwhile land of the saints. Sabbath after Sabbath the ministers preached sermons (as of course ministers still do) deploring the signs of waning piety. "Truly so it is," one minister lamented in 1674, "the very heart of New England is changed and exceedingly corrupted with the sins of the times." There was, he said, a growing spirit of profaneness, pride, worldliness, sensuality, gainsaying and rebellion, libertinism, carnality, formality, hypocrisy, "and a spiritual idolatry in the worship of God."

Yet Puritanism remained an important element in the life of New Englanders, and it was in some degree to affect the outlook of most Americans for many generations. It left its lasting mark not in the form of theological doctrines or religious practices but in the form of attitudes that were real though hard to define—a sense of duty, of hard work and of success as its reward, and of mission to make the world a better place.

## The Chesapeake Country

The Massachusetts Bay Colony began as a planned society, and early New England continued to be characterized by a sense of collective interest and social purpose. The Chesapeake Bay colonies—Virginia and Maryland—developed in a somewhat different way. “The most noticeable feature of the Chesapeake settlements,” the historian Wesley Frank Craven has written, “is the absence of a common purpose and goal except such as was dictated principally by the requirements of individual interest.”

### MARYLAND

One of the stockholders of the London Company, George Calvert, Lord Baltimore, after taking part in the promotion of Virginia, conceived the idea of undertaking a new colony on his own. Himself a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, Calvert had in mind primarily a gigantic speculation in real estate, and incidentally the establishment of a refuge for Roman Catholics, victims of political discrimination in England. After getting a Newfoundland grant from James I and spending a winter on it, he looked over Virginia and decided to relocate his colony in the warmer climate to the south of his previous location. From Charles I he obtained a patent to a wedge of Virginia's territory which lay north of the Potomac and east of Chesapeake Bay, and which the King now christened Maryland in honor of his Roman Catholic wife, the Frenchwoman Henrietta Maria. George Calvert died before the grant was made official, and it was then issued (1632) to his son Cecilius, the second Lord Baltimore.

The Maryland charter contained some curious provisions which revived in the colony a feudal concept long dead in the mother country. Calvert and his heirs were to hold their province as “true and absolute lords and proprietaries,” acknowledging the suzerainty of the King by the annual payment of two Indian arrowheads and a fifth of all the gold and silver to be mined. The proprietor, exercising within Maryland a power comparable to that of the King in England, was to have the privilege of subinfeudating his land—that is, granting it in

parcels to men who would become his vassals. But he was to make no laws incompatible with those of England, and none without the consent of the freemen or their representatives.

Since the London Company (which still claimed its land rights in Virginia) objected to the Calvert grant, Lord Baltimore remained at home to defend his interests at court. He appointed his brother Leonard Calvert governor and sent him with another brother to see to the settlement of the family's province. In March of 1643 the *Ark* and the *Dove*, bearing 200 or 300 passengers, most of them Protestants, entered the Potomac and turned into one of its eastern tributaries. On a high and dry bluff these first arrivals laid out the village of St. Mary's, while the neighboring Indians, already withdrawing to avoid native enemies, assisted by selling land and providing stocks of corn. The early Marylanders knew no massacres, no plagues, no starving time.

Spending a large part of the family fortune in the development of their American possessions, the Calverts had to attract many thousands of settlers if their venture was to pay. They encouraged the immigration of Protestants as well as Roman Catholics, and since relatively few of the latter were inclined to leave England, the Protestant settlers (mostly Anglicans) soon far outnumbered the Catholics.

The Calverts drew on the experience and example of Virginia. To the early arrivals they offered land on even more generous terms—one hundred acres for each man, another one hundred for his wife and for every servant he brought along, and fifty for each of his children. The landholders were expected to pay the same modest quitrent as those in Virginia (one shilling for every fifty acres). The Virginia governor welcomed the newcomers and offered them his aid, but not all the Virginians were so friendly. One of them, William Claiborne, made continual trouble for the Maryland proprietors by his claim to Kent Island, which lay within the Maryland boundaries. In Claiborne's absence Leonard Calvert invaded the island and took it by force (1637).

At the insistence of Maryland settlers, the proprietor agreed (1635) to the calling of a representative assembly—the House of Delegates,

as it came to be known—which based its proceedings on the rules of Parliament. By the 1650s Maryland had a bicameral legislature, with the governor and his council constituting the upper house. The governor was appointed by the proprietor, Lord Baltimore. This was similar to the government that was developing in Virginia, except that there the governor was appointed by the King.

Politics in Maryland from the beginning were complicated by the hostility of the Protestants toward the Catholic minority and the Catholic proprietor. To appease the majority, he appointed a Protestant as governor in 1648. To further calm the colony, he sent over from England the draft of an "Act Concerning Religion," which assured freedom of worship to all who believed in Jesus Christ. Before passing this as part of the Maryland Toleration Act (1649), the legislature added a series of religious offenses with drastic penalties for them, including the death penalty for cursing God. The act did not end the political turbulence in Maryland.

## TOBACCO AND SOCIETY

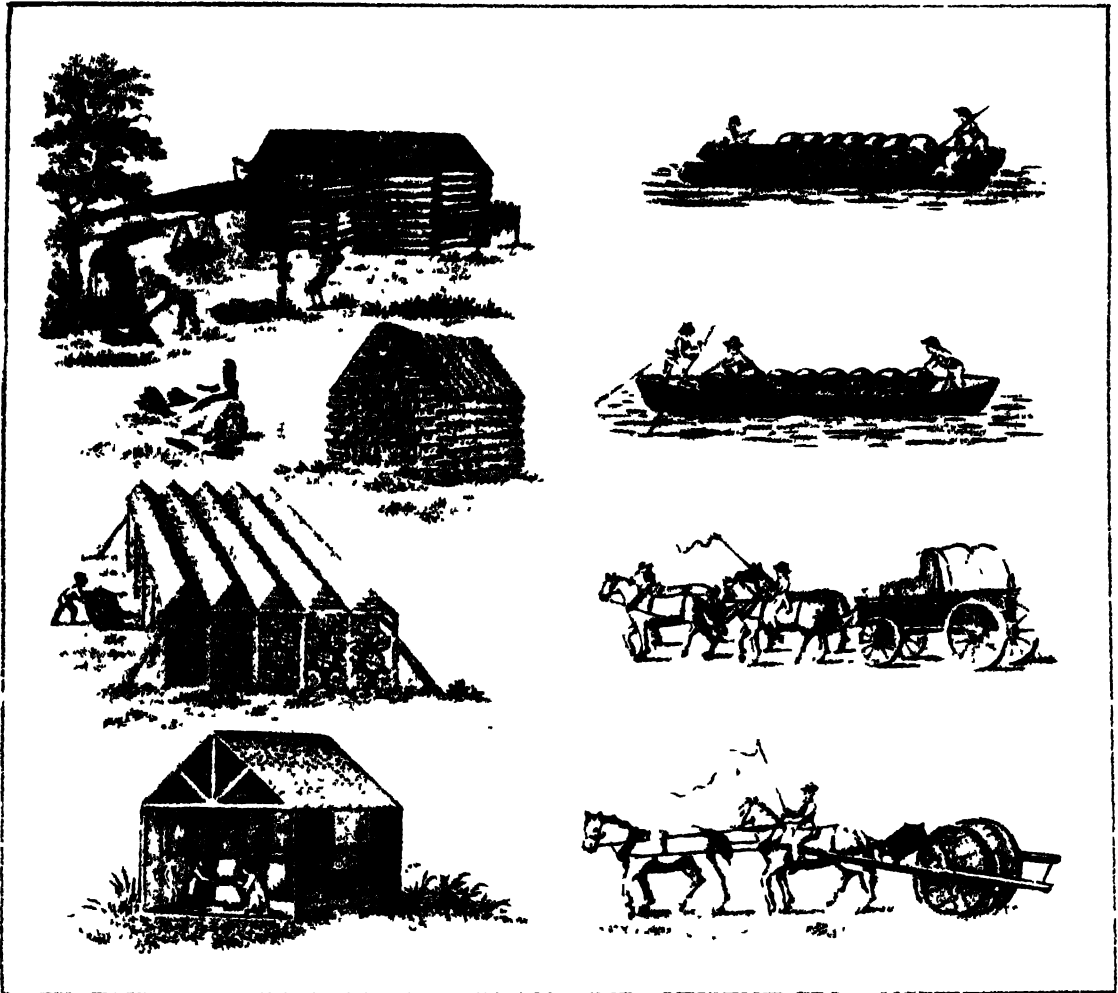
Tobacco growing quickly spread throughout the Chesapeake settlements—in Maryland as well as Virginia—and provided the basis for the society that grew up in the region. Accounting for tobacco's primacy were not only the soil and climate but also the long and irregular shoreline, with dozens of deep creeks and rivers emptying into the bay. To transport heavy hogsheads overland was difficult and damaging to the leaf, but for the man with a farm on one of the natural waterways it was easy enough to roll the hogsheads to his own landing, from which ocean-going ships could carry them to markets abroad. The early settlers therefore took up land along the bay and the navigable streams, and many acquired extensive tracts. Thus most of the people came to be widely scattered, living on isolated farms. Villages or towns were few.

Even if a man owned a thousand acres or more, he actually farmed only a small part of

### Virginia Tobacco Land [1686]

In 1686 the Reverend John Clayton of York, here, England, visited the Virginia tobacco country. Twenty years later he is reported to the Royal Society of London—a society of Englishmen and colonists devoted to scientific inquiry—

*And yet in truth tis only the barrenest parts that they have cultivated by tilling and planting only the highlands, leaving the richer vales unimproved because they understand not anything of draining. So that the richest meadow lands, which is one third of the country, is boggy, marsh, and swamp, whereof they make little advantage but lose in them abundance of their cattle, especially at the first of the spring, when the cattle are weak and venture too far after young grass. Whereas vast improvements might be made thereof, for the generality of Virginia is sandy land with a shallow soil, so that after they have cleared a fresh piece of ground out of the woods, it will not bear tobacco past two or three years, unless cowpenned [and thus manured]. Therefore every three or four years they must be for clearing a new piece of ground out of the woods, which requires much labour and toil, it being so thick grown all over with massy timber. Thus their plantations run over vast tracts of ground, each ambitious of engrossing as much as they can, that they may be sure to have enough to plant, and for their stocks and herds of cattle to range and to feed in. Plantations of 1,000, 2,000 or 3,000 acres are common, whereby the country is thinly inhabited, the living solitary and unsociable, trading confused and dispersed, besides other inconveniences. Whereas they might improve 200 or 300 acres to more advantage, and would make the country much more healthy. For those that have 3,000 acres have scarce cleared 600 acres thereof, which is peculiarly termed the plantation, being surrounded with the 2,400 acres of wood, so that there can be no free or even motion of the air*



Tobacco Preparation Eighteenth Century

*When tobacco was harvested, the stalks were hung in a well-ventilated barn to cure. After several months in damp weather when the leaves were pliable, they were stripped from the stalks, sorted, and tied into "hands," then packed tightly in hogsheads. These were stored in public warehouses until examined by official inspectors. Eventually the hogsheads were carried by boat or wagon or were rolled to the nearest ship landing. Ships from England ascended the rivers of the tobacco country to pick up cargoes. From William Tatham, An Historical and Practical Essay on the Culture and Commerce of Tobacco (London, 1800).*

his land, because of the difficulty of clearing it. On his clearing he raised not only tobacco but also corn, fruit, vegetables, cattle, hogs, and other things for his own and his family's use, so that the farm was fairly self-sufficient. His life was hard. He lived in no elegant mansion but in a small and often crude house, and he worked in his fields alongside his boys and his servants or slaves — if he had any.

His servants might have come with him from England. If he brought them along and paid their way, he received not only a headright of land for each of them but also their services for a term of years, usually four or five. Or the servants might have come later, binding themselves to their master in return for their passage over. Some were sold into servitude against their will. From time to time, beginning

as early as 1617, the English government dumped shiploads of convicts in America, though according to Captain John Smith "some did chuse to be hanged ere they would go thither, and were." The government also transported prisoners taken in battles with the Scots and with the Irish in the 1650s. Likewise it got rid of other groups deemed undesirable: orphans, vagrants, paupers, and those who were simply "lewd and dangerous." Still other involuntary immigrants were neither dangerous nor dependent but were victims of kidnaping, or "impressment."

The system of temporary servitude grew naturally out of existing practices in England, such as that of apprenticeship by which a youth bound himself to a master for seven years to learn a trade. Men and women binding themselves to a master in America were commonly known as "indentured" servants because of the papers recording the contract, papers which were cut or torn with an indented or indentured edge, so that the two copies, one going to the master and the other to the servant, would correspond. Upon completing his term the servant was entitled to certain benefits—clothing, tools, and occasionally land—in addition to his freedom and the privilege, if he could afford it, of acquiring servants of his own.

Relatively few of the indentured servants landed in New England, where the economy was not such as to create much of a demand for them. During the seventeenth century they flocked to Virginia and Maryland, where the laborious processes of cultivating tobacco required many hands.

Throughout this period, the number of black workers on the tobacco farms increased rather slowly. "Most of the Negroes came from the Spanish Indies or directly from Africa," the historian David Hawke explains, "and were of small use to a farmer with little time to spare in directing an untrained man who spoke a strange tongue." In Virginia there were fewer than 300 Negroes in 1640, and only about 2,000 in 1670, when the total population of the colony had reached 40,000. By that time blacks were being treated as permanent slaves and no longer as temporary servants. But the day of the great tobacco plantation, with its labor force consisting almost entirely of Negro slaves, still lay in the future.

As early as 1640 the price of tobacco had begun to fall because of overproduction and

because of the poor quality of much of the product. In that year the Virginia government made an attempt at crop control, ordering the farmers of the colony to plant less. This directive was hard to enforce throughout Virginia, and it had no effect at all in Maryland, which refused to cooperate. While Virginians complained about the "trash" that Marylanders were exporting, the price continued on a fluctuating downward trend. To maintain their incomes, planters tried to grow more tobacco, not less. Those who could acquired additional land and labor and enlarged their fields. Thus the price decline contributed to the eventual development of great plantations.

In the Chesapeake region, with its scattered population, the English county was adapted as the basic unit of local government. In Virginia the House of Burgesses created eight counties in 1634. The governor and his council appointed the sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other county officials. In Maryland the proprietor originally intended to set up vast feudalistic estates, each with a baron who would be responsible for governing the settlers on his land. But a county system similar to that of Virginia grew up instead. Though Virginians and Marylanders did not elect their county officers, they could exert considerable influence in county affairs. Still, these people had a smaller role in local government than did contemporary New Englanders.

Though there was more religious diversity in Maryland than in Virginia, Anglicans predominated in both colonies, but in both of them Anglicanism soon ceased to be quite the same thing that it was in England. Virginia laws dating from 1643 directed all members to conform to the Church of England, ordered the expulsion of nonconformists, and required the payment of tithes to support the established church. The Bishop of London was supposed to watch over the far-flung American parishes, but he left the responsibility to the colonial governors, who most of the time were preoccupied with political affairs. Actual control gravitated to the parishes themselves. They worked out relatively democratic and independent church organizations of their own. Local vestries (governing boards of laymen) hired pastors on a yearly basis and provided salaries. These were paid in tobacco, and the amount remained the same while the price fluctuated. The living was uncertain, and to qualify as a

pastor a candidate had to cross the ocean and be ordained by a bishop in England, there being no bishops in America. Fewer and fewer able and well-trained men were attracted to the ministry, and the numbers of idle and profligate "fox-hunting parsons" increased. Even the most conscientious parsons found it next to impossible to give adequate care to the souls of their parishioners, so far apart did the planters live and so extensive were the parish boundaries. Often the elaborate rituals of the Church had to be simplified or omitted altogether.

In Virginia, as in Massachusetts, laws were passed as early as the 1640s to encourage schooling. A Virginia statute ordered county officials to "take up" children whose parents were "disabled to maintain and educate them." In promoting schools, Massachusetts had the advantages of fairly compact settlement, a comparatively large number of university graduates among the early settlers, and a religion that strongly emphasized the ability to read the Bible. Education in the seventeenth-century tobacco colonies was left mainly to individual families, who, when they could afford to do so, imported servants as tutors or endowed "old field schools" on worn-out tobacco lands.

### POLITICAL TURBULENCE

The political history of Virginia from the 1640s to the 1670s centered on the career of Sir William Berkeley, a strong-willed Oxford graduate who at the age of thirty-six arrived in 1642 with an appointment as governor from King Charles I.

In the beginning Governor Berkeley was popular. He helped to open up the interior by sending out explorers who crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains. He directed a force that put down the Indians in 1644 when old Chief Opechancanough led them in a bloody attack comparable to the massacre of twenty-two years earlier. Opechancanough was captured and, against Berkeley's orders, was shot and killed. The defeated Indians agreed to a treaty ceding all the land between the York and the James rivers to the east of the fall line, and prohibiting white settlement to the west of that line.

This attempt to delimit Indian territory—like many such attempts later in American history—was a failure from the start. Virginia was growing fast, especially after Cromwell's victo-

ry in the English civil war and the flight of many of the defeated Cavaliers to the colony. By 1650 its population (16,000) was twice as large as in 1640, and by 1660 five times as large (40,000). As the choice lands along the tidewater were taken up, new arrivals and servants completing their terms or escaping from their masters pressed on beyond the falls into the piedmont. By 1652 three counties had been formed in the territory recently set aside for the Indians. Clashes frequently occurred between the Indians and the frontiersmen.

When Cromwell seized power in England, Berkeley had to give up the governorship of Virginia, but King Charles II reappointed him after the Stuart Restoration. Once back in office, Berkeley, by the force of his personality, and by corrupting the council and the House of Burgesses, made himself practically an autocrat. Originally the Virginia government had been remarkably democratic. When the first burgesses were elected in 1619, all men aged seventeen or older were entitled to vote. After 1670 the vote was restricted to landowners, and elections were seldom held, the same burgesses remaining in office year after year. Each county continued to have only two representatives, even though the new counties of the back country contained many more people than some of the old ones of the tidewater area. Thus the more recent settlers on the frontier were underrepresented—if indeed they were represented at all.

Popular discontent, made worse by the low price of tobacco, was already widespread when, in 1673, the young, bold, handsome Cambridge graduate Nathaniel Bacon arrived in Virginia. His wealthy family gave him the money to buy a good farm in the back country and got him a place on the governor's council. A few years later the Indians raised the war cry on the frontier, killing several hundred whites, among them Bacon's overseer. Bacon and other concerned landholders demanded that Governor Berkeley send the militia out to pursue and chastise the marauders. But Berkeley preferred not to antagonize the Indians—he and many of his political associates were profiting from a large-scale trade with them—and so he ordered the militia merely to guard the edge of settlement. Bacon then led a force of his own to attack the Indians, whereupon Berkeley dismissed him from the governor's council and proclaimed him and his men rebels.

Thus, in 1676, began Bacon's Rebellion. When Berkeley, to gain popular support, called for a new election of burgesses, Bacon ran and was overwhelmingly elected. Going to Jamestown for the session, the rebel, not yet thirty years old, confronted the governor, now seventy. Berkeley had Bacon arrested but, hesitating to hang such a "darling of the people," pardoned him and gave him a commission to fight the Indians. While Bacon went off with his army, the House of Burgesses passed a series of reforms, known as Bacon's Laws, to lessen the authority of the governor and give greater powers of self-government to the counties. Now Berkeley again denounced Bacon as a rebel, and Bacon turned back from the frontier and marched with his army toward Jamestown, while Berkeley fled. Bacon captured the town and burned it, but when he was on the point of taking command of Virginia, he died of dysentery. Berkeley returned, recovered control, secured the repeal of most of Bacon's Laws, and saw to the execution of thirty-seven of the leading rebels before he was recalled to England, where he too died.

Later generations of Americans, looking back and finding a parallel between 1676 and 1776, were to view Bacon as a forerunner of the Patriots who championed the cause of Independence. He was not that, though his example helped to inspire the rebels who came long after him. He had advocated reform of the colonial government, not separation from England. He represented a disaffected group of the ruling class, but he also gained a following among the common people of Virginia.

His rebellion aroused the discontented of Maryland also. These people objected not only to Lord Baltimore's religion but also to his economic exploitation and arbitrary rule of his domain. From quitrents, export duties, and other sources, the proprietor was making out of the colony the present-day equivalent of more than a third of a million dollars a year. In 1670 he copied Virginia and limited the suffrage to landholders, then undertook to get control of the legislature. At the time Bacon was burning Jamestown, two Marylanders tried to rouse a mob to overthrow the proprietor's government. Both men were hanged.

## More Proprietary Colonies

### CAROLINA

After Lord Baltimore had received his Maryland grant, no new colonization projects got under way from England for approximately thirty years, until the Stuart Restoration. Then Charles II, having returned from his wandering exile (1660) to reign as the Merry Monarch, proceeded to reward his faithful courtiers with truly regal gifts of American land. He not only acknowledged with royal charters the various colonies that had broken off from the (to him) detestable Puritan commonwealth of Massachusetts, but he also gave rise within a quarter of a century to four additional colonies: Carolina, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. All these, like Maryland, were founded by proprietors rather than companies. By this time, companies had lost interest in colonization and had turned to more profitable ventures; meanwhile, because of the presence of already thriving settlements, proprietors were finding colonization much easier than it had been in the days of Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh.

Carolina (after the Latin *Carolinus*, meaning Charles), partly taken like Maryland from the Virginia grant, was awarded by Charles II to a group of eight of his favorites, all prominent politicians active in colonial affairs. One was the Virginia governor, Sir William Berkeley, but the man who was to do the most for the development of Carolina was Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, about to become the Earl of Shaftesbury. In successive charters (1663, 1665) the eight proprietors received joint title to a vast territory stretching south to the Florida peninsula and west to the Pacific Ocean. Like Lord Baltimore in respect to Maryland, they were given almost kingly powers over their grant.

Like him, they expected to profit as landlords and land speculators, reserving tremendous estates for their own development, selling or giving away the rest in smaller tracts, and collecting annual payments as quitrents from the settlers. Though committed to the

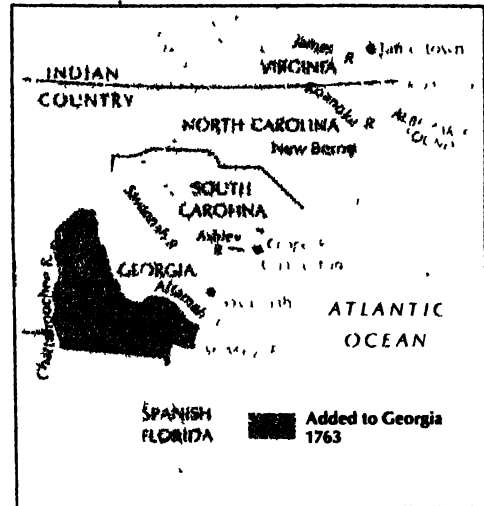


advancement of the Church of England, the Carolina proprietors welcomed customers whether Anglican or not. Indeed, the charter guaranteed religious freedom to all who would worship as Christians. The proprietors also promised political freedom—at least as much of it as was to be found anywhere else in America—with laws to be made by a representative assembly. They hoped to attract settlers from the existing American colonies and thus to avoid the expense of financing expeditions from England.

The proprietors, four of whom had investments in the African slave trade, also intended to introduce slaves into the colony so as to profit both from selling them and from using their labor. Early settlers were offered a bonus of extra land for every black bondsman or woman they brought in. Negro slavery existed from the outset in Carolina, with no transitional period of temporary servitude as in Virginia.

The leading proprietor, the Earl of Shaftesbury, desired a planned society and a uniform pattern of settlement for the colony. With the aid of the philosopher John Locke he drew up the Fundamental Constitution for Carolina in 1669. According to this document, the territory was to be divided into 12,000-acre squares, with counties consisting of forty squares apiece. In each county, eight of the squares would belong to the proprietors, or "seigneurs," eight others would go to newly created nobles, who would bear the title of "landgrave" or "cacique," and the remaining twenty-four would be distributed among ordinary settlers, or "leet-men." At the bottom of this stratified society would be the blacks, whose subjection would be complete, regardless of their possible conversion to Christianity: "Every freeman of Carolina shall have absolute power and authority over his Negro slaves, of what opinion or religion soever." Proprietors, nobles, and other landholders would have a voice in the colonial parliament in proportion to the size of their land holdings.

While the Fundamental Constitution, with occasional revisions, remained in effect (at least on paper) for thirty years, Carolina was slow to develop, and when it did, it took a pattern much less regular and artificial. In fact, the colony developed along two natural but quite different lines in its two widely separated areas of settlement—the one in its northeastern corner, around Albemarle Sound; and the other



**The Carolinas and Georgia**

far to the southwest, on the Ashley and Cooper rivers and in their hinterland.

The northern part of Carolina, the first part to be settled, suffered in the early years from geographical handicaps, the coastal region being isolated by the Dismal Swamp, by the southeastwardly flow of the rivers, and by the lack of natural harbors usable for ocean-going ships. As a Carolina proprietor, Virginia's Governor Berkeley worked hard to induce Virginians to take up land on the other side of the colonial boundary, and gradually the Albemarle settlements grew. Virginians were inclined to look upon the neighboring Carolinians as a lazy and immoral set of runaway servants, debtors, thieves, and pirates. Actually, most of these people—like many in the Virginia they had left behind—were honest but poor tobacco-growing farmers, though they showed the marks of their primitive, backwoods existence, having few roads and practically no villages, churches, schools—or slaves. The settlers disliked paying quitrents, and when one of Nathaniel Bacon's lieutenants, John Culpeper, took refuge in Albemarle County, some of them followed him in overthrowing the Albemarle governor, in 1677, and took temporary control themselves.

The southern part of Carolina was favored with an excellent harbor at the point where the Ashley and Cooper rivers joined (as local boost-

ers eventually were to say) "to form the Atlantic Ocean." Here in 1670 a fleet bringing colonists arrived whom the Earl of Shaftesbury had sent out after realizing that settlers from existing colonies were not going to flock in. Then in 1680 he saw to the laying-out of the city of Charleston, which soon had its wharves, fortifications, and fine houses, and its wide streets running at right angles to one another. Settlers took up land along the two rivers, down which they began to send large quantities of corn, lumber, cattle, pork, and (in the 1690s) some rice to Charleston, for shipment to Barbados in the British West Indies. To Charleston also came furs, hides, and Indian slaves obtained by traders who were advancing farther and farther into the interior, around the southern end of the Appalachians, to deal with the southwestern tribes.

In Charleston and its vicinity there developed a stratified society that embodied the spirit, though not the letter, of Shaftesbury's Fundamental Constitution. Many of the early inhabitants had moved here from the declining sugar plantations of Barbados and other West Indian islands. These people, already familiar with African slavery, brought their blacks with them. Large planters, often with homes in Charleston as well as plantations nearby, and city merchants occupied more or less the position of the nobles in the Shaftesbury plan. Ordinary farmers, many of them located at some distance inland, corresponded roughly to the "leet-men." The wealthy planters and merchants, centering in Charleston, dominated the region's economy, social life, and politics. Charleston became the capital of Carolina in 1690, when the governor took up his residence there, leaving a deputy to take charge of the Albemarle settlements.

Already there were in fact two Carolinas, each having a distinctive way of life, long before the colony was formally divided (1729) into North and South Carolina, with completely separate governments.

## NEW YORK

The year after making his Carolina grant, Charles II bestowed (1664) upon his brother, the Duke of York, all the territory lying between the Connecticut and Delaware rivers. A

large part of this land presumably belonged to the Massachusetts Bay Company by virtue of the company's sea-to-sea grant. The whole region was claimed by the Dutch, who occupied strategic points within it.

The Dutch republic, after winning independence from Spain, had launched upon its own career of overseas trading and empire building in Asia, Africa, and America. On the basis of Hudson's explorations, the Dutch staked an American claim and proceeded promptly to exploit it with a busy trade in furs. To add permanence to the business, the Dutch West India Company began to encourage settlement, transporting whole families on such voyages as that of the *New Netherland* in 1624, and later offering vast feudal estates to "patroons" who would bring over immigrants to work the land. So developed the colony of New Netherland. It centered on New Amsterdam with its blockhouse on Manhattan Island and included thinly scattered settlements on the Hudson, the Delaware, and the Connecticut, with forts for their protection. In 1655 the Dutch extended their sway over the few Swedes and Finns settled along the lower Delaware. In the Connecticut Valley, they had to give in to the superior numbers of the English moving out from Massachusetts Bay.

Three Anglo-Dutch wars arose from the commercial and colonial rivalry of England and the Netherlands throughout the world and particularly in America, where the English resented the foreign stronghold that wedged apart their own northern and southern colonies and provided smuggling bases for the Dutch. In 1664 troop-carrying vessels of the English navy put in at New Amsterdam and extracted a surrender from the arbitrary and unpopular governor, the peglegged Peter Stuyvesant. During the final conflict the Dutch reconquered and briefly held their old provincial capital (1673-1674), then lost it again for good.

New York, formerly New Netherland, already the property of the Duke of York and renamed by him, was his to rule as virtually an absolute monarch. Since he was himself a Roman Catholic, and the inhabitants of his province included Anglicans from England and Puritans from New England as well as Calvinists from Holland, he found it expedient to be broad-minded with regard to religion and politics.



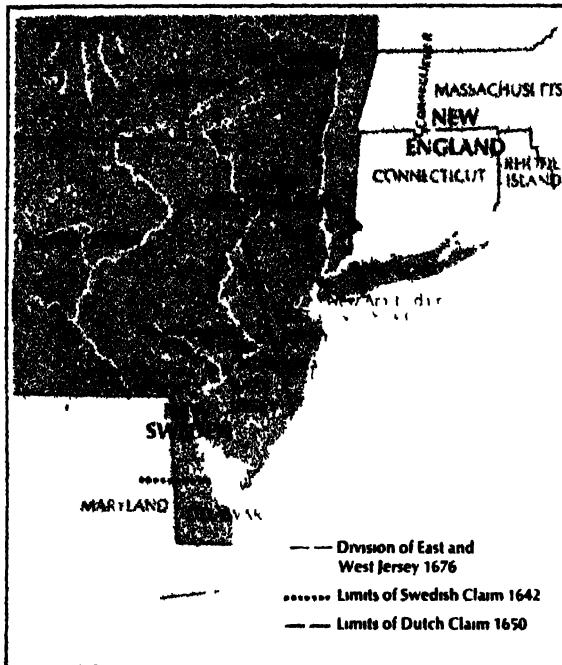
**The Stadt Huys, New Amsterdam**

*The government building, together with the adjoining buildings in a typically Dutch style made New Amsterdam look much like a town in Holland. It continued to have much the same appearance when this drawing was made about 1679, after the English had established control and renamed the place New York. From the Journal of a Voyage to New York 1679–1682 by Jasper Dankers and Peter Stuyler (Courtesy of the Long Island Historical Society)*

Like other proprietors before him, instead of going to America he delegated powers to a governor and a council. The Duke's Laws, which the first governor issued, basing them on some of the laws of Massachusetts and Connecticut, provided for no town meetings but for the election of certain local officials and for the gubernatorial appointment of others. These laws also directed each town to set up a church and to give tax support both to it and to any other church that residents of the town might organize. Thus there was to be a variety of established churches. On the Duke's instructions, a later governor, who took office in 1683, consulted with representatives of the people and with them adopted a Charter of Liberties

and Privileges, which guaranteed the rights of Englishmen and called for an elected assembly.

The Duke's concessions failed to satisfy all New Yorkers. Many people complained about the inequality of property holding and political power. The Duke confirmed the Dutch patroonships already in existence, the most notable of them being Rensselaerswyck with its 700,000 acres around Albany, and he gave comparable estates to Englishmen in order to create a class of influential landowners loyal to him. Wealthy English and Dutch landlords, shipowners, and fur traders, along with the Duke's political appointees, actually dominated the colonial government.



**The Middle Colonies in the Seventeenth Century**

The system of landholding turned away from New York some settlers who preferred living on their own farms to working as tenants on someone else's estate. Under English rule the population nevertheless grew much faster than under the Dutch regime. By 1685, when the Duke ascended to the throne as James II, New York contained about four times as many people (around 30,000) as when he had taken it over some twenty years before. Most of them still lived within the Hudson Valley, close to the river itself, with the largest settlement at its mouth, in the town of New York. The colony had become predominantly English in both population and customs, yet Dutch traditions lingered on to leave a distinctive regional flavor.

On the north and west the Duke's dominions were extended as far as Lake Ontario by means of a protectorate over the Iroquois. On the east, however, his territory was trimmed in a boundary compromise with Massachusetts

and Connecticut. On the south it was enlarged somewhat by his claim (based on conquest from the Dutch) to land west of the lower Delaware, but was diminished even more by his generosity in parting with his possessions. He gave what became New Jersey to a couple of cronies, both Carolina proprietors, Sir George Carteret and Sir John Berkeley. The latter sold his half interest to two enterprising members of the Society of Friends, thus bringing the Quakers into the colonization business. The Duke gave what became Delaware to another Quaker, the greatest colonizer of all, William Penn

### THE QUAKER COLONIES

The Society of Friends originated in mid-seventeenth-century England in response to the preachings of George Fox, a Nottingham shoemaker, whose followers came to be known as Quakers from his admonition to them to "tremble at the name of the Lord." The essence of Fox's teachings was the doctrine of the Inner Light, the illumination from God within each soul, the divine conscience, which when rightly heeded could guide human beings along the paths of righteousness.

Of all the Protestant sectarians of the time, the Quakers were the most anarchistic and the most democratic. They had no church government except for their monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings at which the congregations were represented on a local, regional, and national basis. They had no traditional church buildings—only meeting houses. They had no paid clergy, and in their worship they spoke up one by one as the spirit moved them. Disregarding social distinctions such as those of sex and class, they treated women as equals and addressed one another with the "thee" and "thou" then commonly used in speaking to servants and inferiors. Defying other accepted conventions, they refused to participate in taking oaths or in fighting wars. The Quakers were unpopular enough as a result of these beliefs and practices, and they increased their unpopularity by occasionally breaking up other religious groups at worship. Many of them were jailed from time to time.

Naturally, like the Puritans earlier, George Fox and his followers looked to America for asylum. A few of them went to New England,

but there (except in Rhode Island) they were greeted with fines, whippings, and orders to leave, and three men and a woman who persisted in staying were actually put to death. Many migrated to northern Carolina, and there, as the fastest-growing religious community, they soon were influential in colonial politics. Yet the Quakers desired a colony of their own, and Fox himself visited America (1671–1672) to look over the land. As the head of a sect despised in England, however, he could not get the necessary grant without the aid of someone influential at the court. Fortunately for his cause, his teachings had struck the hearts of a number of wealthy and prominent men, one of whom in particular made possible a large scale effort to realize the Quaker dream.

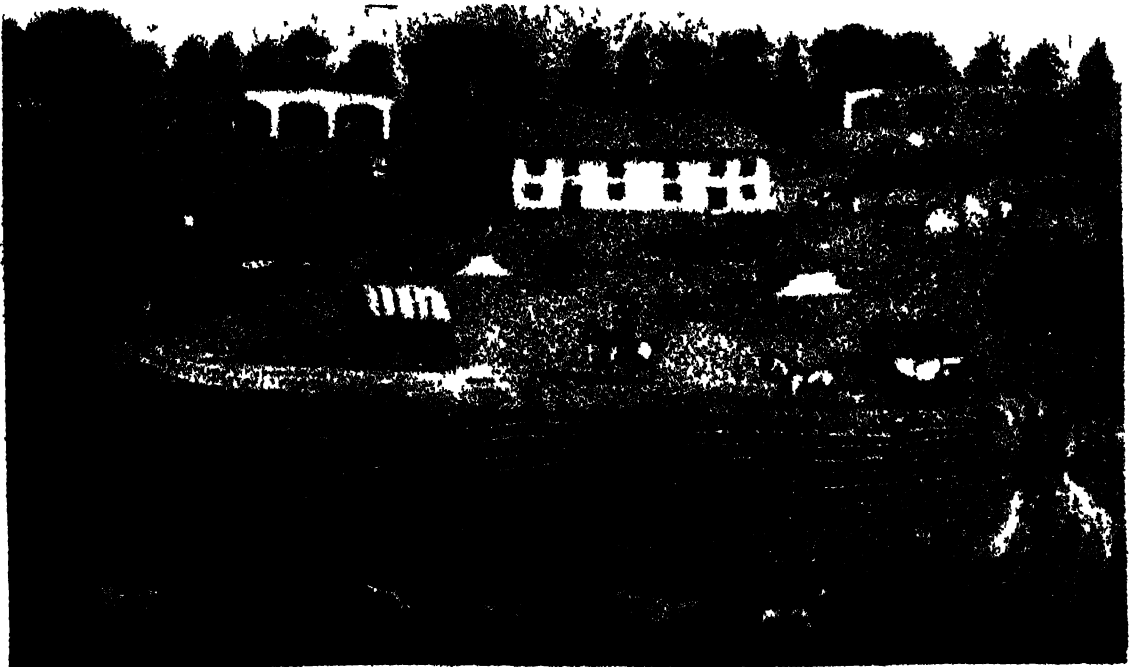
William Penn—whose father was Sir William Penn, an admiral in the Royal Navy and a landlord of valuable Irish estates—received a gentleman's education at his father's expense but could not overcome his mystical inclina-

tions despite his father's discipline. Converted to the doctrine of the Inner Light, the younger Penn took up evangelism and, though always moderate and soft-spoken, was repeatedly put in prison, where he wrote a powerful tract, *No Cross, No Crown*. With George Fox he visited the European continent and found Quakers there, as in the British Isles, who longed to emigrate.

New Jersey, half of which two of his fellow Quakers owned, received Penn's attention when he was asked to assist them with their debts. In their behalf he helped to see to the division of the province into East and West Jersey, Carteret as one of the original proprietors keeping the East, and the Quakers the West. West Jersey soon began to fill up with Friends from England while East Jersey was being populated mostly by Puritans from New England. Before long Penn together with other wealthy Quakers purchased the eastern property from Carteret (1682), and eventually the

#### Quakers Going to Meeting

*The meeting house, at which these members of the Society of Friends are arriving on a summer day, was in a Welsh settlement near Cambria, Pennsylvania. Though made in the early nineteenth century, this print depicts a scene not very different from that in similar communities of the previous century. (Library of Congress)*





**Penn's Treaty with the Indians**

*William Penn entered into a number of treaties with the Indians for the purchase of land. These treaties were scrupulously observed by the Pennsylvania Quakers. Benjamin West's painting, one of the best known of his many historical canvases, probably represents negotiations that were carried on in June 1683. (Library of Congress)*

two Jerseys were reunited as one colony (1702), second in Quaker population only to Pennsylvania itself.

Pennsylvania—which Charles II insisted on naming for his old ally the admiral—was based on the King's grant of 1681. Penn, reconciled with his father, had inherited the latter's Irish lands and also his claim to a small fortune owed by the King. Charles II, possessing more real estate than ready cash, paid the debt with a grant of territory, between New York and Maryland, which was larger than England and Wales combined and which (unknown to him) contained more value in soil and minerals than any other province of English America. Within this fabulous estate Penn was to have the rights of both landlord and ruler while acknowledging the feudal suzerainty of the King by the token payment of two beaver skins a year.

Like the Calverts, the Carolina proprie-

tors, and the Duke of York, Penn intended to make money from land sales and quitrents and from private property to be worked for him. He promptly sold several large tracts to rich Quaker associates and one tract of 15,000 acres to a group of German immigrants led by Francis Daniel Pastorius. Through his informative and honest advertising—as in his pamphlet entitled *A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania*, which was translated into several European languages—Penn made Pennsylvania the best-known and most cosmopolitan of all the colonies. But he and his descendants were to find almost hopeless the task of collecting quitrents.

Much more than a mere real-estate promoter, Penn undertook in Pennsylvania what he called a Holy Experiment. Colonies, he said, were the "seeds of nations," and he proposed to plant the seeds of brotherly love. Closely

supervising the planting, he devised a liberal Frame of Government with a representative assembly. He personally voyaged to Pennsylvania (1682) to oversee the laying-out, between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers, of the city he appropriately named Philadelphia ("Brotherly Love"), which with its rectangular streets, like those of Charleston, helped to set the pattern for most later cities in America. Penn believed, as had Roger Williams, that the land belonged to the Indians, and he was careful to see that they were reimbursed for it, as well as to see that they were not debauched by the fur traders' firewater. With the Indians, who honored him as a rarity, an honest white man, his colony had no trouble during his lifetime. It prospered from the outset because of his thoughtful planning and also because of

favorable circumstances, including the mildness of the climate and the fertility of the soil. The settlers were well-to-do and well equipped, and they received assistance from the people of other colonies and from the Hollanders and Swedes and Finns already there — for Pennsylvania when Penn first saw it was not as much of a wilderness as Virginia had been when John Smith arrived.

Delaware, after its transfer to Penn from the Duke of York (1682), was treated as a part of Pennsylvania (and was known as "the lower counties") but was given the privilege of setting up its own representative assembly. The three counties did so in 1703, and thereafter Delaware was considered a separate colony, though until the Revolution it continued to have the same governor as Pennsylvania.

## Experiment in Union

The colonies, for the most part, had originated as quite separate projects and had grown up in rather independent ways, with little thought for a long time that they belonged, or ought to belong, to a unified empire. To be sure, a step toward intercolonial union had been taken with the forming of the New England Confederation, but that was the doing of some of the colonies themselves for their own purposes, and these did not include the strengthening of imperial control. A very different kind of union, one imposing the King's authority on the colonies, was attempted in the 1680s with the establishment of the Dominion of New England. This was intended to help enforce the mercantile system.

### THE MERCANTILE SYSTEM

One of the arguments for colonization in the first place had been that colonies would increase the wealth of the mother country and lessen her dependence on other nations. According to the mercantile theory, she would prosper and grow strong by exporting more and more to foreigners and importing less and less from them. Colonies would aid by provid-

ing a market for her manufactured goods and a source of supply for raw materials she could not produce at home. To get the full benefit, she would have to exclude foreigners (as Spain had done) from her colonial trade.

On the whole, such a mercantile system would meet the needs of the colonies as well as those of the mother country. The colonies stood to gain by concentrating on the crude products of the field and forest, and exchanging these for the finer goods of manufacturers abroad who had the capital and skilled labor to produce them economically. In actual practice, the colonies did turn out products that the mother country needed for her own consumption or for resale to foreigners — products such as tobacco, furs, lumber, and naval stores. But the colonies also produced surpluses of commodities like wheat, flour, and fish that competed with commodities produced in the mother country. And whether the goods were complementary or competitive, the colonial producers sometimes found that they could make a better bargain with Spaniards, Frenchmen, or Hollanders than with Englishmen. Hence a considerable trade early developed between the English colonists and foreigners, especially the Dutch.

At first the English government, distracted as it was by the conflict between King and Parliament, made only half-hearted efforts to regulate the colonial trade in accordance with mercantilist principles. Once Oliver Cromwell was in power, he secured laws from Parliament (1650, 1651) to keep Dutch ships out of the English colonies. After the Restoration, under Charles II, the government went much further, adopting legislation that had the positive aim of directing colonial trade as well as the negative one of excluding foreigners from it.

This legislation consisted of three Navigation Acts. The first of these (1660) closed the colonies to all trade except that carried in English ships, which were defined as ships built in England or the colonies and manned by sailors of whom three-fourths were Englishmen or colonists. This law also required that certain enumerated items, among them tobacco, be exported from the colonies only to England or to an English possession. The second act (1663) provided that all goods sent from Europe to the colonies had to go by way of England and that taxes could be put on the goods during their transshipment. The third act (1673) was designed to prevent colonists from evading the export control (in regard to the enumerated items) by clearing from one colonial port for another and then actually heading for a foreign port. The new act levied a duty on cargoes bound for the intercolonial coastal trade. It also provided for the appointment of customs officials to collect the duties and administer the Navigation Acts. These acts, with later amendments and additions, were to form the legal basis of England's mercantile system for a century.

### THE DOMINION OF NEW ENGLAND

If the Navigation Acts were to be strictly enforced, the King would have to do more than dispatch customs officials to America. With the cooperation of Parliament, he would have to set up in London some kind of agency to oversee colonial affairs. He would also have to get more direct control over the colonial governments than he had.

Only in Virginia, a "royal colony" since 1624, did the King as yet have the right to appoint the governor. In Massachusetts, a "cor-

porate colony," the people elected their own governor, as they also did in Plymouth. In Maryland, a "proprietary colony," the appointing power had been delegated to the proprietor. When Charles II created other proprietary colonies—Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania—he himself followed the Maryland example. And when he gave royal charters to Connecticut and Rhode Island, he accepted these two as "corporate colonies" by allowing them to go on choosing their officials. Moreover, he and his predecessors had permitted the development of an assembly representing the people (or some of the people) in each of the colonies—royal, corporate, or proprietary. And the assemblies were claiming more and more power for themselves.

For help in enforcing the new trade regulations, Charles II could not place much reliance on the colonial governments. Least of all could he depend on Massachusetts, the worst offender, which dared to behave practically like an independent republic, even usurping the sovereign's prerogative of coining money. The Puritan oligarchs, whose religion in itself was obnoxious to him, persisted in maintaining their own established church instead of the Church of England, thus violating the terms of the Massachusetts Bay Company's charter, which obliged the colony to conform to English law. Many of the Massachusetts merchants, disregarding the Navigation Acts as well, evaded the payment of duties and made smuggling a regular business.

After a royal investigating commission had visited the Bay Colony and reported back to London the extent of the colony's illegal business, Charles II decided to take action for controlling and chastising Massachusetts in particular, and tightening control over the American empire in general. In 1675 he set up a special committee, the Lords of Trade (consisting of some of his official advisers on the Privy Council), to make recommendations for imperial reform. The Lords of Trade recommended that the King participate more directly in colonial government. He did so, and at the same time struck a blow at Massachusetts when, in 1679, he denied her authority over New Hampshire and chartered a separate, royal colony whose governor he would himself appoint.

Charles II wished to make a royal colony of Massachusetts as well, but her corporate



charter was one he could not revoke without a lawsuit. He soon had grounds for action. When the Lords of Trade ordered Massachusetts to see that the Navigation Acts were obeyed, the General Court replied that, in view of the charter's provisions for self-government, Parliament had no power to legislate for the colony. When the Lords of Trade sent over a customs official to see to the enforcement of the acts, the General Court not only refused to recognize him but arrested the local agents he appointed. Finally the King started legal proceedings that led, in 1684, to the revocation of the charter.

His brother and successor, James II, went much further when he came to the throne in 1685. He combined Massachusetts and the rest of the New England colonies into one Dominion of New England, and later he added New York and New Jersey to it. Within this dominion he eliminated the existing assemblies, and over it he placed a single governor, Sir Edmund Andros, with headquarters in Boston. An able but stern and tactless administrator, Andros thoroughly antagonized the people as he proceeded to levy taxes and enforce the Navigation Acts. When colonists protested on the basis of their rights as Englishmen—especially their right to be taxed only with the consent of their representatives—he retorted that they had no rights.

## THE "GLORIOUS REVOLUTION"

Soon after the Bostonians heard of the 1688 movement to overthrow James II in England, they determined to overthrow his viceroy in New England. A mob set out after Andros and other royal officials; he escaped but later surrendered and was imprisoned.

The Massachusetts leaders now hoped to get back their old corporate charter, but they were to be disappointed. Despite the persuasive efforts of Increase Mather, an outstanding Puritan divine who was on a lobbying mission in London, the new sovereigns, William and Mary, combined Plymouth with Massachusetts and claimed the land as a royal colony (1691). Under the new charter, they themselves appointed the governor, but they restored the General Court with its elected lower house and allowed the General Court to choose the mem-

bers of the upper house. This charter also did away with the religious test for voting and officeholding. Though there remained a property requirement, the great majority of Massachusetts men could meet it. Thus the Massachusetts government, no longer a Puritan oligarchy, began to be fairly democratic. Quakers, Baptists, and other sectarians now were free to worship as they pleased in what once had been the exclusive land of the Puritans, though all had to pay tithes in support of the established (Congregational) church.

The politico-religious crisis in Massachusetts gave rise to an atmosphere of tension and uncertainty in which public hysteria could thrive. This, together with the efforts of preachers to revive the Puritan sense of sin, led to the worst witch craze ever to occur in the English colonies (though others as bad or worse occurred in various parts of contemporary Europe).

None of the seventeenth-century ministers labored harder to keep up the old faith than did Increase Mather and his son Cotton. Puritanism demanded a well-educated ministry, and the Mathers were intellectual giants. Like most scientists of the period, they believed in witches. In one of the many learned books he wrote, *Illustrious Providences* (1684), Increase Mather undertook to show that God had a special concern for New England and that the people should note carefully any evidence of "Witchcrafts, Diabolical Possessions, Remarkable Judgements upon noted Sinners," and the like. There later arose a widespread hysteria, which went to its greatest extremes in the Massachusetts town of Salem, where it was stimulated by the antics of two West Indian slaves who were steeped in voodoo lore. Hundreds of people were accused as witches, many of them were sentenced to die, and nineteen were actually put to death before the witchcraft trials were stopped in 1692.

Afterward almost all the witch hunters publicly repented their part in the affair. The Mathers often were blamed for it, though in fact they had pleaded for moderation during the trials and had helped to bring them to an end. Still, the net effect was to diminish the prestige and authority of the Church and its leaders.

Andros had been ruling New York through a lieutenant governor, Captain Francis

### Confession of a Witch [1692]

Mrs Mary Osgood, of Andover, Massachusetts, was examined for witchcraft, September 8, by a group of judges. They reported

*She confesses that, about 11 years ago, when she was in a melancholy state and condition, she used to walk abroad in her orchard, and upon a certain time she saw the appearance of a cat, at the end of the house, which yet she thought was a real cat. However, at that time, it diverted her from praying to God, and instead thereof she prayed to the devil, about which time she made a covenant with the devil, who, as a black man, came to her and presented her a book, upon which she laid her finger, and that left a red spot and that upon her signing, the devil told her he was her God, and that she should serve and worship him, and she believes she consented to it. She says further that about two years ago, she was carried through the air, in company with deacon Frye's wife, Ebenezer Baker's wife and Goody Tyler, to five mile pond, where she was baptised by the devil, who dipped her face in the water and made her renounce her former baptism, and told her she must be his, soul and body, forever and that she must serve him, which she promised to do.*

About six weeks later, on October 19, she was visited by Increase Mather, who reported

*Mrs Osgood freely and relentingly said that the confession which she made upon her examination for witchcraft, and afterwards acknowledged before the honourable judges, was wholly false and that she was brought to the said confession by the violent urging and unreasonable pressings that were used toward her. She asserted that she never signed the devil's book, was never baptised by the devil, never afflicted any of the accusers, or gave her consent for their being afflicted.*

Nicholson, who enjoyed the support of the wealthy merchants and fur traders of the province. The same groups had shared in political power while New York was a proprietary colony of the Duke of York and after it became a royal colony upon the Duke's accession to the English throne as James II. The groups that were excluded from a fair share in the government—farmers, mechanics, small traders, and shopkeepers—already had a long accumulation of grievances when news came of James' fall and Andros' arrest. Rebellious militiamen seized the New York City fort, and Lieutenant Governor Nicholson sailed away to England.

The leadership of the New York rebels fell to Jacob Leisler, who had come from Germany, succeeded as a merchant, and married into a prominent Dutch family, but had never gained acceptance as one of the colony's ruling class. Leisler's followers proclaimed him commander in chief, and he declared his loyalty to William and Mary. He claimed, as intended for him, the

dispatches arriving from the King and Queen and addressed to "Our Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of our Province of New York, or in his absence to such as for the time being take care to keep the peace and administer the laws." Assuming the title of lieutenant governor, Leisler with the aid of the militia kept the peace and administered the laws for two years (1689–1691), until William and Mary finally appointed a new governor, who was given authority to call an elected assembly. When, ahead of the new governor, a British officer appeared with a contingent of troops, Leisler refused to surrender the fort to him. Leisler afterward yielded, but the delay gave his political enemies, soon back in power, a pretext for charging him with treason. He and a son-in-law were hanged, drawn, and quartered.

In Maryland the people at first assumed (erroneously) that the Catholic Lord Baltimore had sided with the Catholic James II and had

opposed the accession of William and Mary. So, in 1689, an old opponent of the proprietor's government, John Coode, started a new revolt as head of an organization calling itself "An Association in Arms for the Defense of the Protestant Religion, and for Asserting the Right of King William and Queen Mary to the Province of Maryland and All the English Dominions." The insurgents drove out Lord Baltimore's officials and, through an elected convention, chose a committee to run the government for the time being. In 1691 William and Mary took advantage of their opportunity to deprive the proprietor of his authority and transform Maryland into a royal colony. (It became a proprietary colony again in 1715, after the fifth Lord Baltimore had joined the Anglican Church.)

Thus the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England touched off revolutions, mostly blood-

less, in the colonies. Under the new regime the representative assemblies that had been abolished were revived, but not the scheme for colonial unification from above. Several of the provinces, however, were now royal colonies in which the King appointed the governor, and over which he potentially had greater direct control than he once had had. The colonists had not yet challenged the ultimate authority of the King. "What had been won (possibly the word should be 'preserved')," W. F. Craven has written, "was the practical right of the colonists to determine very largely for themselves questions of public policy fundamentally affecting their domestic life. In this large measure of self-government the colonists were to find with time good cause for remembering the Revolution as a glorious one and, by remembering it, fresh and potent defenses for their rights of self-government."

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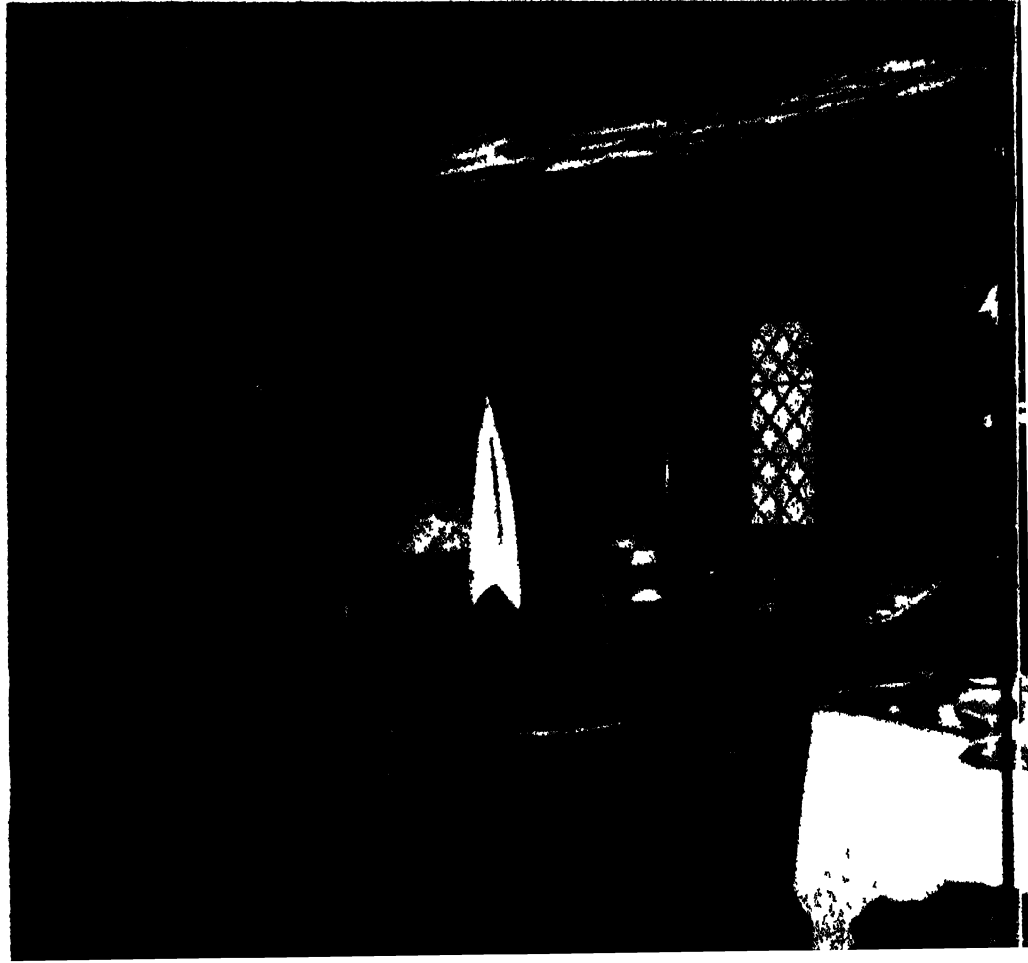
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# Provincial Americans

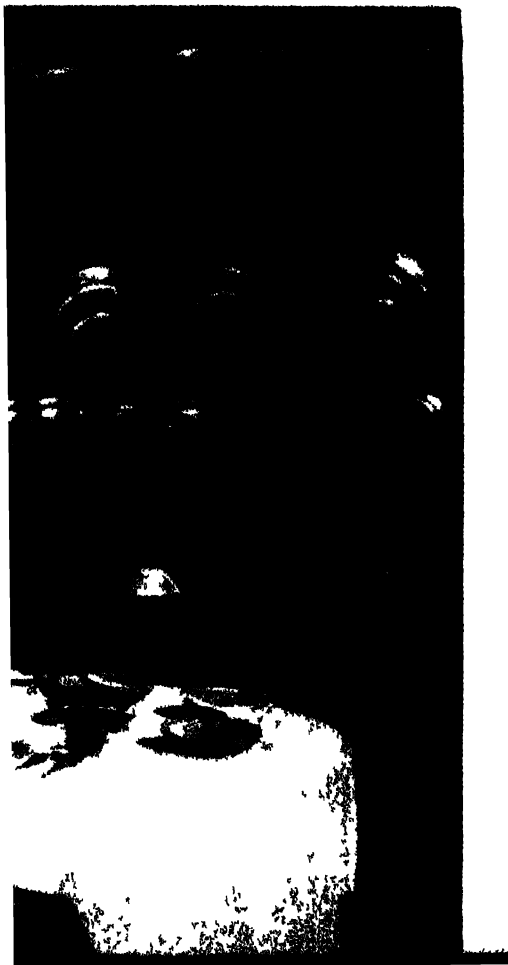




## Three

The seventeenth-century colonists remained essentially transplanted Englishmen, though even the first arrivals had begun to depart from many of their accustomed ways. As new generations grew up in America, they developed a more and more distinctive character. In the course of the eighteenth century they became provincial "Americans" a term that had been applied to them even before 1700 but did not come into general use until after 1750.

There were three main reasons for the divergence between the culture of the colonies and that of the homeland. First, English society was not transplanted as a whole. The people who left for America were not entirely typical of England; usually they were the more discontented or the more adventurous; they were themselves in some degree different. Second, they found in the New World a new environment with new challenges and opportunities. Certain elements of the English inheritance flourished and adapted themselves to the strange surroundings, while others withered or never took root at all. Third, some of the early colonists (the Dutch, for example) had come from countries other than England, and during the eighteenth century new



### **The John Ward House**

*The left hand portion of this house in Salem, Massachusetts, was built in 1684. The right-hand portion, with another gable, was added later, and the lean-to in the rear still later. Note the second story overhang. This was characteristic of many seventeenth-century dwellings in New England. It was copied from medieval English houses, but its origin and purpose are uncertain. The most likely theories are these: (1) It was a technical matter of construction: separate, offset posts for the two stories made possible a stronger framing than did one long post. (2) It was a matter of aesthetics: people liked the way the overhang looked. Note too the casement windows with their diamond-shaped panes, also typical of the time. (Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.)*

### **The John Ward House: Kitchen**

*In colonial New England the kitchen usually was located either in an ell of the house or in a lean-to at the rear (in the South, the kitchen often was located in a separate outbuilding). The kitchen, with its large fireplace, was used not only for the preparation of meals but also as a dining room, a general workroom, and to a considerable extent a living room. Its furniture included a trestle table, chairs, a wash-bench, meat tubs, a cheese press, a churn, a spinning wheel, often a loom, and sometimes a pallet bed for an indentured servant or an apprentice. (Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.)*

arrivals in much larger numbers came from other places – from Scotland and Ireland, the European continent, and Africa. Hence, in America, there was a mixture of peoples and cultures, though the English continued to predominate.

Provincial Americans were affected by new currents of thought coming from abroad during the eighteenth century. This was the Age of the Enlightenment, when the ideas of the Englishman Sir Isaac Newton and other scientists (or “natural philosophers”) gave a fresh conception of God’s universe. They saw it as a universe that God had fashioned like a clock and set to operate with regularity. It followed natural laws that could be

understood by the use of man’s reason. The spirit of the Enlightenment spread from England and Europe to America.

In the developing American character there were variations from colony to colony and from region to region. The New England colonies had much in common with one another, less in common with the middle colonies (Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York), and still less in common with the Southern colonies. These last fell into two subgroups with important differences between the two: the tobacco colonies (Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina) and the others (South Carolina and, after its founding in 1733, Georgia).

## The Expanding Settlements

The population of English America increased tenfold between 1700 and 1776. This mainly reflected the growth of existing colonies; only one new colony was founded during these years.

### THE FOUNDING OF GEORGIA

Georgia, the last of the mainland colonies, was unique in its origins. It was founded by neither a corporation nor a proprietorship, and its guiding purpose was neither to make profits nor to create a sectarian refuge. In the beginning Georgia was the work of trustees serving without pay. Their main purpose was twofold: to provide a new start in life for Englishmen imprisoned for debt, and to erect a military barrier against the Spaniards on the southern border of English America.

As claimants to the whole continent, the Spaniards had looked suspiciously upon the encroachment at Jamestown, and had taken one captive while giving up three of their own men in a half-hearted attempt to frighten the English away. In a treaty of 1676 Spain recognized England’s title to lands already occupied by English subjects. Ten years later Spanish forces from Florida attacked and destroyed an

outlying South Carolina settlement south of the treaty line. When Spain and England went to war in Europe (1701–1713) hostilities were renewed in America, and thereafter another European conflict with American repercussions was continually expected.

General James Oglethorpe, a hero of the late war with Spain, was much concerned about the need for a buffer colony between South Carolina and Florida. As head of a parliamentary committee investigating English prisons, Oglethorpe also knew at first hand the plight of honest debtors rotting in confinement. He conceived the idea of solving both problems at once by resettling such prisoners as farmer-soldiers on the faraway frontier.

The charter from George II (1732) transferred the land between the Savannah and Altamaha rivers to the administration of Oglethorpe and his fellow trustees for a period of twenty-one years. In their colonization policies they were to keep in mind the needs of military security. Landholdings were limited in size so as to make settlement compact. Negroes – free or slave – were excluded, and Roman Catholics also, to forestall the danger of wartime insurrection and of collusion with enemy coreligionists. And the Indian trade was strictly regulated, with rum prohibited, to lessen the risk of Indian complications.

Oglethorpe himself led the first expedition, building a fortified town at the mouth of the Savannah in 1733, and later constructing additional forts south of the Altamaha. Only a few debtors were released from jail and sent to Georgia, but hundreds of needy tradesmen and artisans from England and Scotland and religious refugees from Switzerland and Germany were brought to the new colony at the expense of the trustees, who raised funds from charitable individuals as well as from Parliament. Though other settlers came at their own expense, immigrants were not attracted in large numbers during the early years. Newcomers

generally preferred to settle in South Carolina, where there were no laws against big plantations, slaves, and rum. Before the twenty-one years of the trusteeship were up, these restrictions were repealed, and after 1750 Georgia developed along lines similar to those of South Carolina.

### THE LABOR SUPPLY

After 1700 few white servants headed for the South, even for Virginia or Maryland, where they once had flocked. The largest numbers

#### An Eighteenth-Century Indenture

This contract, dated May 13, 1784, was made late in the history of indentured servitude and typifies the standardized form that developed. Note that it is printed, with spaces left blank to be filled in. In this particular case, the contract was made between the master and his servant before either of them sailed for America. Originally, a contract was written in two identical parts on a single sheet, which was torn in two, leaving an indented or indentured edge - hence the term "indenture."

**This Indenture** MADE the *Thirteenth* Day of *May* 7  
in the Year of our Lord one thousand, seven hundred and *eighty-four* BETWEEN

*John Dickey* of *Broughsham* in the County of *Wiltshire* by *Consent of his Father* of the one Part, and *John Dickey* of *Wiltshire* of the other Part,

WITNESSETH, that the said *John Dickey* doth hereby covenant, promise and grant, to and with the said, *John Dickey* - *his* - Executors, Administrators and Assigns, from the Day of the Date hereof until the first and next Arrival at *Philadelphia* in America, and after for and during the Term of *Three* Years to serve in such Service and Employment as the said

*John Dickey* - or his Assigns shall there employ *him* according to the Custom of the Country in the like Kind. In Consideration whereof the said *John Dickey*

*Dickey* doth hereby covenant and grant to and with the said *John Dickey* to pay for *his* Passage, and to find allow *him* Meat, Drink, Apparel and Lodging, with other Necessaries, during the said Term; and at the End of the said Term to pay unto *him* the usual Allowance, according to the Custom of the Country in the like Kind. IN WITNESS whereof the Parties above-mentioned to these Indentures have interchangeably put their Hands and Seals, the Day and Year first above written.

Signed, Sealed, and Delivered,  
in the Presence of

*John Dickey*  
*John Dickey*

*Alex<sup>r</sup> Bead*

*John Dickey*

now went to Pennsylvania, where opportunities and working conditions were most attractive, and they continued to go to Pennsylvania and New York, though in dwindling numbers, until long after the American Revolution. Many of these people were "free willers" or "redemptioners" from Europe, who gave their indentures to the captain of the ship they boarded. He auctioned off their contracts after putting in at an American port, and each buyer then claimed his servants.

In Virginia and Maryland white servitude was being replaced by Negro slavery, which had advantages for the master. It gave him a constant labor supply and practically complete control over it. Identifiable by their color, black slaves could not run away and merge themselves with the mass of free humanity as white servants could. Nor could slaves rise out of their bondage to compete with their masters for wealth and political influence as the servants sometimes did. Moreover, considering the length of their service, slaves were cheaper, especially with the fall of slave prices after 1697, when the monopoly of the Royal African Company was broken and the slave trade was opened to English and colonial merchants on a competitive basis.

This trade was dominated by ships owned in England but was shared by others owned in New England. The latter often followed a "triangular" route. That is, a ship took rum and other items from a New England port to the Guinea Coast of Africa, slaves from Africa to the West Indies, and sugar and molasses as well as specie and bills from the West Indies to the home port. There the molasses would be distilled into rum for another voyage of the same kind. On the African coast the slave marts were kept supplied by native chieftains who made a business of capturing enemy tribesmen in warfare and bringing them, tied together in long lines known as "coffles," out of the jungle. Then, after some haggling on the seashore, came the horrors of the "middle passage"—so called because it was the second of the three legs of the voyage—during which the slaves were packed in the dark and stinking hold, with no sanitary facilities, no room to stand up, and scarcely air enough to breathe. Those who died en route were thrown overboard, and the losses from disease were sometimes high.

Slavery in colonial times was not confined to any single region. Slaves labored as domes-

tics and occasionally as farm hands for wealthy families in the North. As of 1763 there were about 230,000 Negroes in all the colonies, most of them slaves. About 16,000 lived in New England, 29,000 in the middle colonies, and the rest in the South. By 1775 nearly half of the people of Virginia and more than two-thirds of those of South Carolina were black.

### POPULATION GROWTH

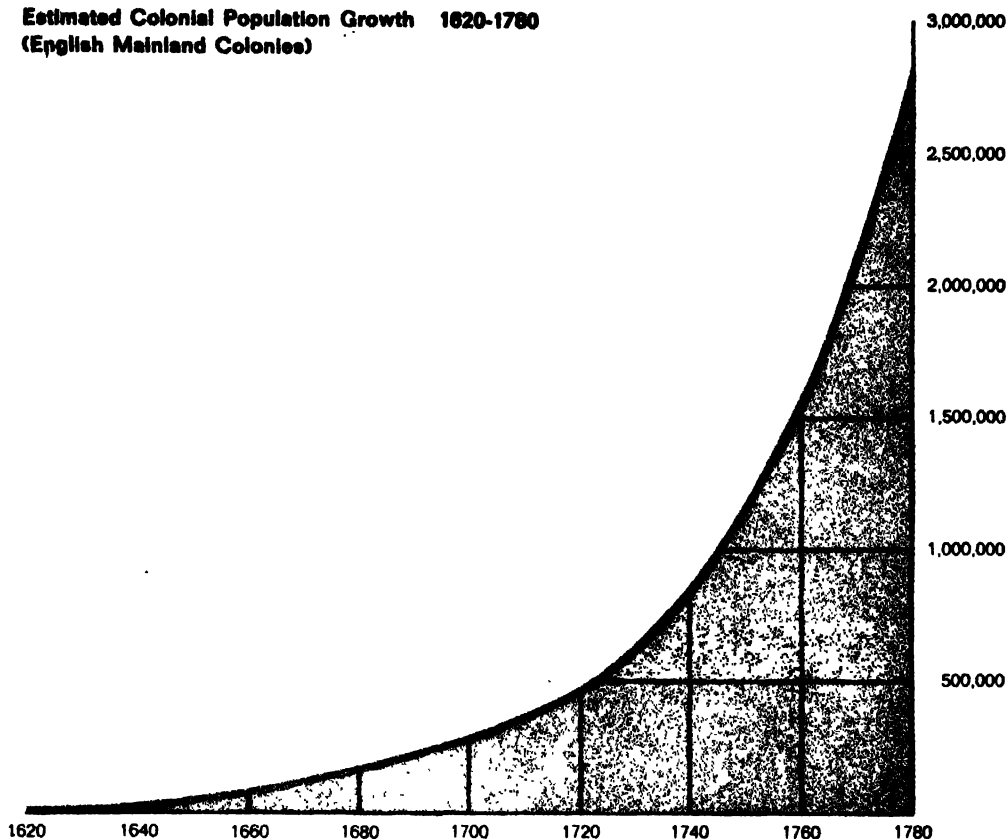
Besides the Africans, other non-English peoples came in large numbers to the colonies after the end of the seventeenth century, while immigration from England itself fell off. Recovering from a prolonged depression in the 1630s, England thereafter began to develop more and more industries that demanded workmen, so that the talk of overpopulation ceased to be heard. Instead of encouraging emigration from its own shores, the government tried to check the loss of English manpower by prohibiting the departure of skilled artisans, while continuing to unload the unemployable or the undesirable upon the defenseless colonies. Although, during the eighteenth century, the colonies received relatively few newcomers from England, the populations of several of them were swelled by vast numbers of arrivals from France, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, and Scotland.

Of these immigrants the earliest though not the most numerous were the French Calvinists, or Huguenots. Under the Edict of Nantes (1598) they had enjoyed liberties and privileges that enabled them to constitute practically a state within the state in Roman Catholic France. In 1685 the edict was revoked, and singly and in groups the Huguenots took the first opportunity to leave the country, until a total of about 300,000 had left for England, the Netherlands, America, and elsewhere, only a small minority of them going to the English colonies. These émigrés were mostly artisans, merchants, and men of letters and science who enriched their new homes with both their talents and their wealth. In America they settled in the towns along the coast from Charleston to Boston, to become the ancestors of Americans like Paul Revere (Rivoire).

Like the French Protestants, many German Protestants suffered from the arbitrary enactments of their rulers, and German Catho-



**Estimated Colonial Population Growth 1620-1780**  
**(English Mainland Colonies)**

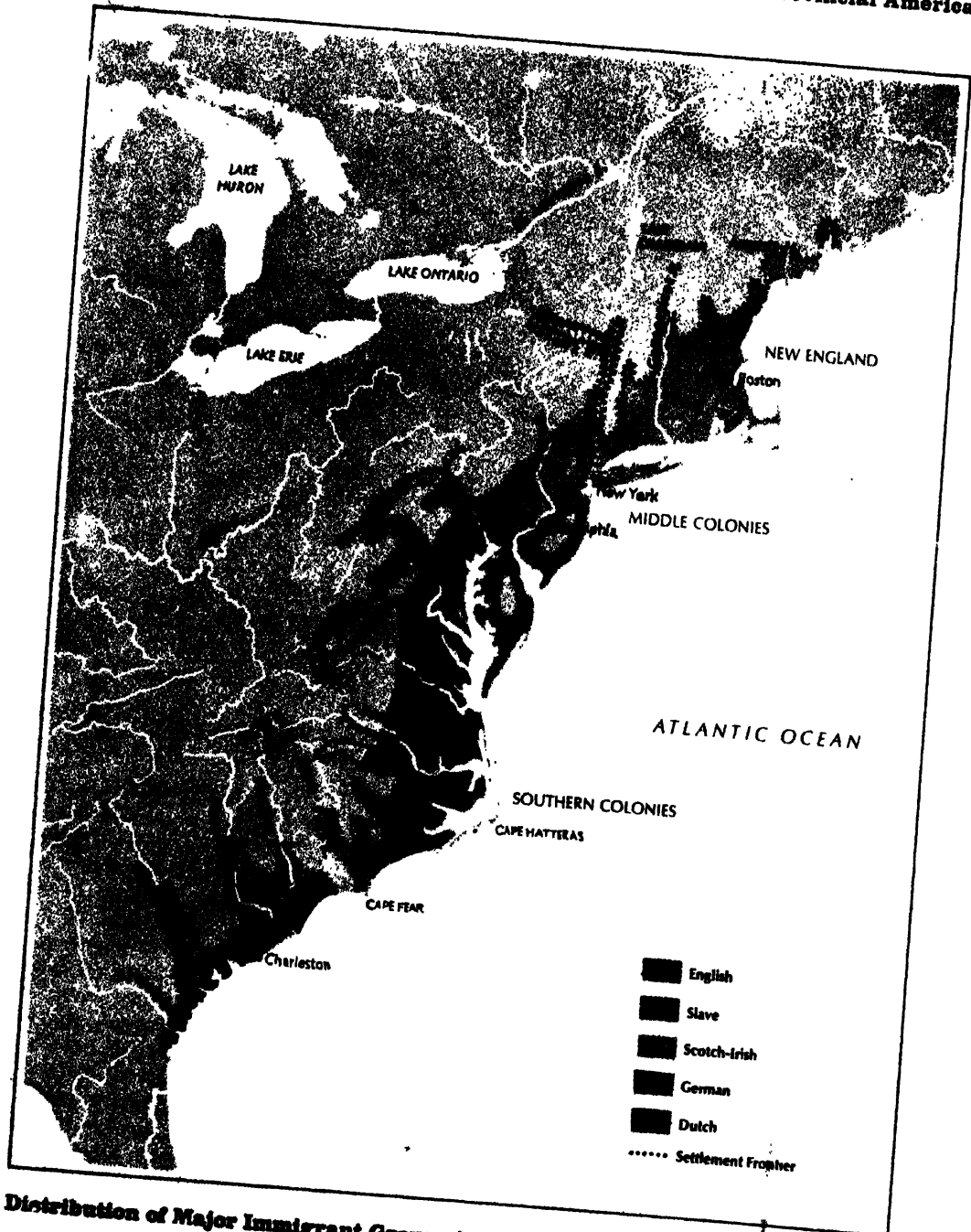


lics as well as Protestants suffered even more from the devastating wars of the Sun King of France, Louis XIV. The Rhineland of southwestern Germany, the area known as the Palatinate, was especially exposed to the slaughter of its people and the ruin of its farms. For the Palatine Germans, the unusually cold winter of 1708–1709 came as the last straw, and more than 12,000 of them sought refuge in England. The Catholics among them were shipped back to Germany and the rest were resettled in England, Ireland, or the colonies.

Arriving in New York, approximately 3,000 of them tried to make homes in the Mohawk Valley, only to be ousted by rapacious colonial landlords. Some of the Palatines moved farther up the Mohawk, but most of them made their way to Pennsylvania, where they received a hearty welcome. After that, the Quaker colony was the usual destination of Germans, who sailed for America in growing numbers, including some Moravians and Mennonites with religious views similar to those of the Quakers. But quite a few of the German Protestants went to

North Carolina, especially after the founding of New Bern (1710) by a company of 600 German-speaking Swiss. All together, the Germans comprised the largest body of eighteenth-century white immigrants except for the Scotch-Irish.

The Scotch-Irish, the most numerous of the newcomers, were not Irishmen at all, though coming from Ireland, and they were distinct from the Scots who came to America directly from Scotland. In the early 1600s King James I, to further the conquest of Ireland, had seen to the peopling of the northern county of Ulster with his subjects from the Scottish Lowlands, who as good Presbyterians might be relied upon to hold their ground against the Irish Catholics. These Ulster colonists—the Scotch-Irish—eventually prospered despite the handicap of a barren soil and the necessity of border fighting with the Irish tribesmen. Then, after about a century, the English government destroyed their prosperity by prohibiting the export of their woolens and other products, and at the same time threatened their religion



**Distribution of Major Immigrant Groups in Colonial America**

by virtually outlawing it and insisting upon conformity with the Anglican Church. As the long-term leases of the Scotch-Irish terminated, in the years after 1710, the English landlords dou-

bled and even tripled the rents. Rather than sign new leases, thousands upon thousands of the ill-used tenants embarked in successive waves of emigration.

Understandably a cantankerous and troublesome lot, these people often were coldly received at the colonial ports, and most of them pushed out to the edge of the American wilderness. There they occupied land with scant regard for ownership, believing that "it was against the laws of God and nature that so much land should be idle while so many Christians wanted it to labor on and to raise bread." There also they fought the Indians as earlier they had fought the Irish. Among their illustrious descendants was the characteristically Scotch-Irish Andrew Jackson.

The Scots and the Irish, as migrants to America, had no connection with the Scotch-Irish. Scottish Highlanders, some of them Roman Catholics frustrated in the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, went with their tartans and kilts and bagpipes to more than one of the colonies, but mostly to North Carolina. Presbyterian Lowlanders, afflicted with high rents in the country and unemployment in town, left in largest numbers shortly before the American Revolution. These Scots, Lowlanders and Highlanders alike, with few exceptions became Loyalists after the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, but the Scotch-Irish were Patriots almost to the man, as were the Irish. The Irish had migrated in trickles over a long period and, by the time of the Revolution, were about as numerous as the Scots, though less conspicuous, many of them having lost their Roman Catholic religion and their identity as Irishmen.

All these various immigrants contributed to the remarkable growth of the colonies. In 1700 the colonial population totaled a quarter of a million or less; by 1775 it was nearly ten times as large, more than 2 million. The number practically doubled every twenty-five years, as Benjamin Franklin observed, leading the English clergyman Thomas Malthus to his pessimistic conclusion (1798) that any population, if unchecked, would increase in a geometrical progression while the means of subsistence (except in a new and favored country like America) could not be increased nearly so fast. Important as the continuing immigration was, the rapid growth of the colonial population was mainly due to natural increase, to the excess of births over deaths. In the colonies, with their abundance of land and opportunity, large families were an asset rather than a liability, and husbands and wives heeded the Biblical advice: "Be ye fruitful and multiply."

Hence the colonists of English origin, those who had arrived earliest and had had the longest time to multiply, continued greatly to outnumber those of non-English origin. Yet the proportion of non-English ancestry increased year by year, from a tenth in 1700 to a third (including the people from Africa) in 1760. The most homogeneous and most purely English part of the colonies was New England, while the most cosmopolitan part was the middle colonies, above all Pennsylvania. By the 1770s the Pennsylvania population was in origin roughly a third English, a third German, and a third Scotch-Irish. These groups did not intermix very much but were concentrated in separate areas—the English around Philadelphia, the Germans to the north and west, and the Scotch-Irish still farther out on the frontier. Many of the Germans continued to speak their native language, which eventually was corrupted into a German-English dialect known as "Pennsylvania Dutch." Nevertheless, in the colonies as a whole, there was a good deal of intermarriage between the different nationalities, and even before the Revolution thousands of Americans could trace their ancestry to two or more nations of the Old World.

As compared with the population of England, that of the colonies was not only mixed but also youthful and masculine, containing somewhat fewer old persons and women, especially along the frontier. And the colonial population was surprisingly mobile, New Englanders resettling in New Jersey and other colonies to the south, and Pennsylvanians (Scotch-Irish and Germans) swarming up the Shenandoah Valley to people the back country of the Carolinas. In all the colonies men and women pushed upstream toward the unsettled wilderness, until with Daniel Boone leading the way into Kentucky (1769) they began even to occupy the land beyond the mountains.

Along the seacoast a number of villages grew into small cities. For more than a century after its founding, Boston remained the largest town, but eventually it was overtaken by both Philadelphia and New York. In 1760 Philadelphia had more than 23,000 people, New York about 18,000, and Boston nearly 16,000. Next in order were Charleston, S.C., with approximately 8,000 and Newport, R.I., with 7,500. After 1700 these colonial towns increased more rapidly than most English cities, yet not always so rapidly as did the American population as a



#### **Baltimore in 1752**

*Though founded in 1729, Baltimore remained a small settlement at the time this painting was made. The town had not developed as a port, since most of the Maryland tobacco growers shipped their crops from their own wharves along the rivers. (The Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore)*

whole. Eight out of a hundred Americans lived in towns in 1720, and only about five or six out of a hundred in 1742. The rest of the people – the overwhelming majority throughout the co-

lonial period – were scattered over the countryside and lived upon farms of one description or another.

## **The Economic Basis**

In the shaping of the provincial economy – that is, in the determination of the ways the colonists made their living – three forces were especially important. One of these was the policy of the British government, which discouraged certain occupations and encouraged others, in accordance with mercantilist principles. A second and more important influence derived from the geographical conditions in America, which favored some lines of activity and made others impracticable. A third consisted of the aims and energies of the individual settlers, who brought with them from the British Isles and the European continent (and, in the case

of the slaves, from Africa) their own skills and habits and aspirations for personal success. As a result of these diverse factors, there flourished in the eighteenth century a variety of agricultural, industrial, and commercial pursuits, not all of which conformed to the broad mercantilistic plan.

### **AGRICULTURE**

Though there were regional differences, farming throughout the colonies had certain characteristics in common. In all the colonies it was a

matter of adapting European plants and animals to American conditions or applying European techniques to the cultivation of native crops. The colonist's tools and methods, while an improvement on those of the Indian, continued to be extremely primitive. The ground was still broken with hoe and mattock or with a crude wooden plow, usually drawn by oxen because of their slower and steadier pull than horses could provide, and often requiring two men to hold and guide it. Harvesting was back-breaking work with sickle or scythe. Grain was threshed with a flail or by the trampling of oxen, and it was winnowed by being tossed in the air for the breeze to carry away the chaff. In George Washington's time these processes were not much advanced beyond what they had been in the day of the Pharaohs, and in colonial America there was even less care of the soil than there had been in ancient Egypt. Most of the colonists gave little thought to conserving their land by rotating crops, applying fertilizers, or checking erosion. Their attitude was reasonable enough in their circumstances: it paid them to economize on labor, not on land.

Near the frontier—that ever-expanding arc from Maine to Georgia, which bounded the area of settlement—subsistence farming was the rule. The frontiersman planted his corn and beans amid the stumps in patches he had incompletely reclaimed from the forest, and with his crops and his catch of wild game he fed himself and his family. Eventually some of the backwoodsmen went in for cattle raising on a fairly large scale, especially in Pennsylvania and the Carolinas. In these areas, long before the day of the cowboy on the Great Plains, herders let their branded cattle roam over an open range and, after the annual roundup, drove them to distant cities. The town of Cowpens, South Carolina, derived its name from its origin as a cattle-raising center. As the line of settlement moved outward, so did the frontier kind of farm and ranch life. Within that line—in areas that, beginning with the seacoast itself, had shared most of the frontier characteristics at one time or another—arose patterns of agriculture increasingly more elaborate, more productive, and more diverse.

In New England—where farmers once had lived on village lots, shared the “commons” as pasture and timberland, and tilled outlying fields—the system of landholding gradually changed. After 1700 the commons were partly

divided into private property, and the fields were consolidated into separate farms. The typical farm became one that was small enough to be worked by the farmer, his sons, and perhaps an occasional hired hand, with the aid of neighbors at harvests and at house or barn raisings. It was bounded by fences made of stones that had been laboriously cleared off the fields. A fairly self-sufficient unit, producing mainly for use rather than for sale, it contained a variety of scrawny livestock, apple and other orchards, and fields devoted chiefly to hay and corn, the prevalence of the “blast” or black-stem rust having discouraged the cultivation of wheat.

An exception to the usual New England farm scene was to be found on the shores and islands of Narragansett Bay. Here were rich and extensive farms on which were bred fine sheep, cattle, and horses, notably the Narragansett pacer. And here gangs of Negro slaves were used.

In New York, despite the abundance of excellent soil, agricultural productivity lagged because of the engrossment of the land in great estates, running to thousands and even hundreds of thousands of acres, on which few people were willing to work as tenants when they could get farms of their own in other colonies. The Dutch and their descendants set examples of careful tillage on the freeholds they had acquired at an early date.

In Pennsylvania, of all the colonies the most favored by nature for farming, the Germans likewise applied the intensive cultivation they had learned in the old country. Their neat and substantial barns were their pride, but the work of their womenfolk in the fields was sometimes shocking to non-Germans. With fairly large holdings, these farmers needed all the labor they could get, and in addition to their wives and daughters they employed indentured servants, women as well as men.

In New York and Pennsylvania the farmers concentrated upon the production of staples to be sold abroad and at home. After ceasing to produce enough food to feed all its own people, New England depended upon these “bread colonies” for its wheat. So, to some extent, did those Southern colonies that were preoccupied with the growing of tobacco.

In the Chesapeake region there still existed tobacco farms as small as a hundred acres, cultivated by the owners, their families, and

perhaps a servant or a slave or two. Such farms, however, had come to be overshadowed by large plantations with thousands of acres and dozens of Negroes. The Maryland plantation of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, reputedly the wealthiest man in the colonies, covered 40,000 acres and contained 285 slaves. On the tobacco plantations slave labor was easily adapted to the simple and repetitive round of tasks that the crop required—sowing, transplanting, weeding, worming, picking, curing, stripping, and packing.

Slave labor was also fairly well suited to rice culture along the Georgia and Carolina coasts. Here dikes and ditches leading from the tidal rivers permitted the necessary flooding and draining of the paddies, while care was taken to see that no salt water reached the rice with the incoming tide. To cultivate the growing rice, men had to stand knee-deep in mud, their bare backs exposed to malarial mosquitoes and to the broiling sun. Since white men could not be hired to do it, Negroes were compelled to perform this torturing and unhealthful work. But the rice plantations were smaller than the tobacco plantations and did not provide a similar year-round routine that would utilize slave labor to the full.

Indigo supplemented rice after the successful cultivation of the dye plant (1743) by Eliza Lucas, the daughter of a West Indian planter. Grown on high ground, the indigo did not get in the way of the rice on the river bottoms, and it occupied the slaves at times when they were not busy with the rice. They tended the indigo fields, cut the leaves, soaked them in vats, and extracted the residue as a blue powder. Glad for a chance to be freed from foreign sources of the dye, Parliament granted a bounty of sixpence a pound.

The British government tried to encourage the production of other crops that would meet the needs of mercantilism. It gave bounties for hemp, and a little was grown in the colonies, particularly in North Carolina, but not enough to make the experiment pay. The government also attempted to force the growth of grapes for wine and of mulberry trees for silk, but had even less success with these than with hemp. Too much skilled labor was required for such products. Obstinate the colonial farmers and planters stuck to those lines of production in

which they had a comparative advantage over producers elsewhere in the world. In some cases, as with tobacco and indigo, the colonial products happened to supplement those grown in England and thus fit the mercantilistic pattern. In other cases, as with wheat, the produce of the colonies competed with that of the mother country and was either irrelevant to the mercantile system or incompatible with it.

## INDUSTRIES

In the 1700s, as in earlier times, farm families produced nearly all their necessities within the household. Here the women did most of the work, baking, churning, spinning, weaving, dyeing, sewing, and making soap, candles, and other things for home consumption. An increasing quantity of goods, however, was manufactured outside the home, in shops. Specialists in various arts and crafts had come to America in the seventeenth century but found it hard to make a living from their specialties. These men had to turn to farming, and their skills deteriorated from disuse. Even after 1700 there were few opportunities for craftsmen in rural areas, particularly in the colonies to the south of Pennsylvania. On many a plantation, slaves were trained to produce the needed manufactures that it was not feasible to import from England.

In the rising towns, artisans of many kinds appeared—carpenters, chandlers (candlemakers), coopers (barrelmakers), cordwainers (shoemakers), weavers, tailors, wheelwrights, and dozens of others. Except in such lines as millinery and dressmaking, women artisans were rare, though now and then a widow took over her husband's work and succeeded as a cobbler, tinker, or even blacksmith. By the year 1750 almost a third of the people of Philadelphia owed their living to a craft of some kind.

The craft usually was a family enterprise, and the shop was on the ground floor of the master craftsman's home. The master was assisted by his sons and by one or more journeymen and apprentices, who lived as members of his household, and who aspired eventually to become masters with shops of their own. In some ways the craftsman was like the small

businessman of the present. He had to procure and train workers, provide materials, supervise the work (while taking an active part in it), and find a market. When possible, he made goods to order, or, as he called them, "bespoke" goods, but in slack times he might produce a stock of articles for general sale. In newspaper advertisements he sometimes made exaggerated and even fraudulent claims for his wares, while running down the wares of his competitors. He sold on credit or for barter, seldom for cash.

In America the guild, or association of craftsmen, which in England regulated each of the trades, did not take root. Regulations regarding apprenticeship, the quality of goods, and other matters were provided by the colonial and municipal governments. Despite the laws intended to maintain high standards, some of the products were shoddy and most of them were inferior to the machine-made goods of today. By 1750, however, American artisans were turning out some articles that compared with the best of that time or of any time. For instance, the gunsmiths of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, were justly famous for the Pennsylvania rifle (also known as the Kentucky rifle), and the wagonmakers of the same town for the Conestoga wagon (the original "covered wagon," with ends up-curved to hold the load securely on hills and rough roads). American silver-smiths, such as Paul Revere, did work as fine as that of England or France and finer than that of the rest of Europe. The same was true of American cabinetmakers.

Colonial craftsmanship became notable for quantity as well as quality. As late as 1700 all but a tiny fraction of the manufactures that the colonists bought were made in England. Before the Revolution, more than half of the manufactures were made in America. The rise of the colonial craftsman was watched with concern by men in London who took the doctrines of mercantilism seriously.

When colonial merchants began to organize the work of shops and households on a larger and more efficient scale, there arose the "putting-out" system, which was a forerunner of the later factory system. The merchant supplied materials to workers in homes or shops, then gathered up and marketed the finished product. Before the Revolution, Lynn, Massa-

chusetts, was already famous for shoemaking and Germantown, Pennsylvania, for producing knit goods. Under the putting-out system the workers were not drawn together as in post-Revolutionary factories.

Water power was widely used in various kinds of colonial mills. At the rapids of streams small enough to be easily dammed, grist and fulling mills were set up to take some of the heavier labor out of the household, grinding grain and fulling cloth (shrinking and tightening the weave by a process of soaking and pounding) for the farmers in the area. The mill-owner was usually a farmer himself in his spare time. He frequently used his water wheel to power a sawmill for cutting his neighbors' logs. Other and busier sawmills accompanied the lumber industry, which followed the retreating forest. Circular saws were as yet unknown, and the up-and-down powered saw, while it would do the work of twenty men in cutting soft pine, was not very efficient in cutting hardwoods, particularly if the trees were large. So it had to be supplemented by the large "pit saw" operated by two men, one down in a pit and the other on the ground above, and also by the ax and the adze, the hammer and the wedge. Other forest industries yielded pitch, tar, resin, turpentine, and potash for a number of industrial uses.

Like lumbering, the fur trade and the fisheries were extractive industries, depending closely upon the resources provided by nature. Both fishing and fur trading became big businesses employing what were, by colonial standards, large amounts of capital. It was expensive to provide fur traders with goods for bartering with Indian trappers—guns, knives, blankets, looking-glasses, and beads to exchange for furs and hides—and most of the business came to be controlled by English merchants in London and colonial merchants in Albany, Philadelphia, and Charleston. It was costly also to outfit fleets for the fishing industry, which concentrated mainly in New England waters, though almost every farmer near a stream or pond was at least a part-time fisherman.

The fisheries led to shipbuilding, the first colonial-built ships being put together on the New England coast for the use of fishermen, and the abundance of timber and naval stores enabled the industry in the colonies to expand

to the point of outdoing that of England itself. So cheap and yet so seaworthy were the materials that, despite the high wages of colonial labor, excellent ships could be produced at as little as half the cost of those built in English yards. Usually a master shipwright contracted for the construction of a vessel, and he procured, paid, and directed the laborers who did the work. While New England kept its early lead in shipbuilding, New York and Pennsylvania also had their shipyards, and Virginia and the Carolinas, with their fine supply of live-oak timber, became important centers of the industry in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Some undertakings on a still larger scale than ship construction were to be found in the iron industry. From almost the very beginnings of Virginia and Massachusetts, small bloomeries and forges were erected to utilize the bog ores in those colonies, and eventually sizable furnaces were erected to smelt either bog or rock ores in almost all the colonies. The most extensive industrial enterprise anywhere in English America was that of the German ironmaster Peter Hasenclever, in northern New Jersey. It was founded in 1764 with British capital and was operated thereafter with a labor force of several hundred, many of whom were brought over from ironworks in Germany. It included not only furnaces and forges but also sawmills and a gristmill.

From the beginning of colonization, the home government encouraged the colonial production of iron in a crude form, as a raw material for English mills and foundries. When colonial ironmakers began to produce more than merely the crude metal, their competitors in England induced Parliament to pass the Iron Act of 1750, which removed the English duty on pig and bar iron but forbade the colonists to erect new mills for the secondary processing of iron or steel. This prohibition was in line with other acts intended to limit the rise of advanced manufactures in America. The Woolen Act (1699) prohibited the export of wool or woollens from a colony to any place outside its boundaries, and the Hat Act (1732) similarly prohibited the export of hats, which could be cheaply made in America because of the availability of beaver skins. But the colonists usually disregarded such legislation when it was in their interest to do so.

## MONEY AND COMMERCE

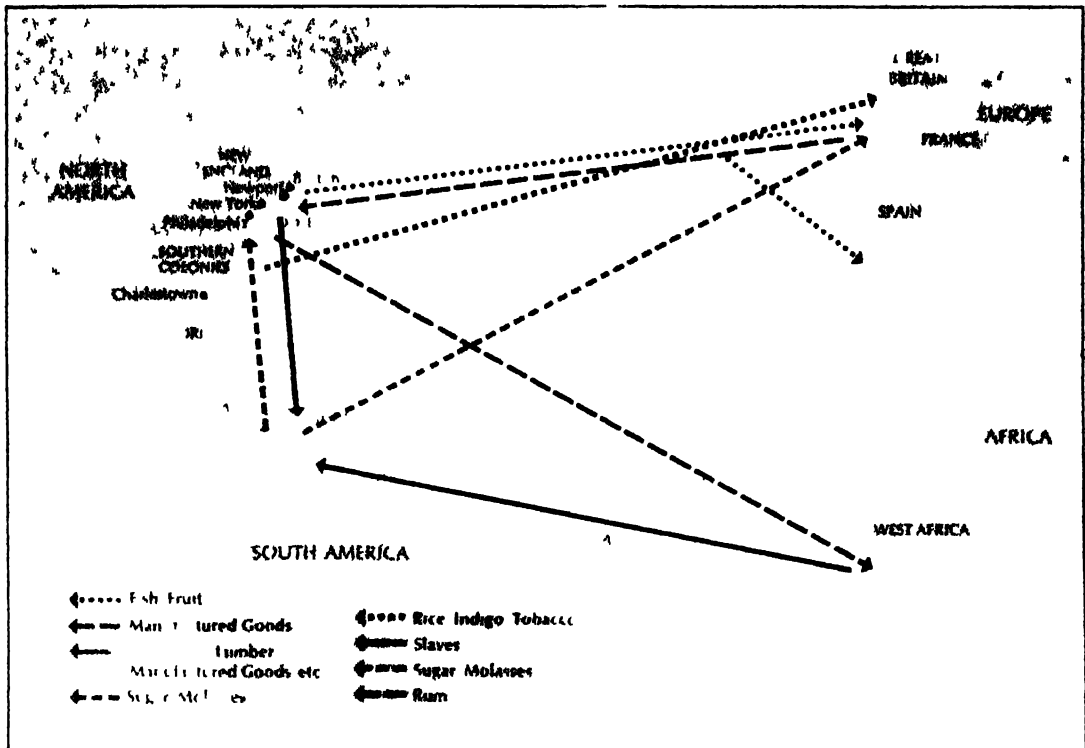
Though the colonists produced most of what they consumed, they by no means achieved economic self-sufficiency. The colonies as a whole could not supply their entire wants from their own agriculture and industry. Neither could any of the separate colonies, nor could an individual household except at an extremely low level of living. To maintain and raise their living standards the mainland colonists had to have the benefits of trade with one another and with people overseas.

Intercolonial trade was fairly extensive and diversified. In the busy coastal traffic the surplus products of each region were exchanged—such products as the fish and rum of New England, the flour and meat of the middle colonies, and the tobacco and indigo of the South. The trade between the seaports and their hinterland involved some of these same products, besides many others, including the variety of small articles carried by the pack-horse peddler. A large proportion of the commodities distributed upriver from the seaports had their origin abroad, and a large proportion of those gathered in the interior were destined for export. Much of the intercolonial and inland trade was thus a part of overseas commerce.

Foreign trade provided indispensable consumer and capital goods that the colonists could not manufacture for themselves in suitable quantity or quality. From abroad the mill-owner had to get his machinery, the shipwright his hardware and navigating instruments, the farmer his spades and other tools, the Indian trader most of his supplies. Even a modest home included kitchen utensils, tableware, needles and thread, lanterns, and other equipment of European make. Wealthier families bought additional imports, luxury items such as mirrors, paper, books, fine furniture, and fancy cloth. The more the colonists prospered, whether individually or collectively, the more they demanded goods of foreign manufacture.

The central problem in the overseas commerce of the colonies was to find the means of payment for these increasing imports. Money was scarce in the colonies. They did not mine their own gold or silver, and the mercantilist policy was intended to drain them of such specie as they might acquire. They did obtain a





**Overseas Trades of Colonial America**

motley collection of Spanish and other European coins from their dealings with pirates and from certain routes of overseas trade. Generally, in their transactions with one another, the colonists resorted to barter or else used money substitutes, though always calculating in terms of pounds, shillings, and pence. Beaver skins circulated widely as a medium of exchange and so did tobacco—not the leaves but warehouse certificates representing tobacco in storage. All the colonies experimented at one time or another with paper currency, often securing it with land. But Parliament suppressed this expedient by legislating against the Massachusetts land bank in 1740, and by outlawing paper money as legal tender in New England in 1751 and in the rest of the colonies later on. Anyhow, this kind of paper was not acceptable in payment for imported goods and services, which had to be bought with specie or with bills of exchange arising from colonial exports. In short, the colonies had to sell abroad in order to

buy from abroad, but British policy attempted to limit and control their selling opportunities.

Though the tobacco planters had an abundant staple for export, they were not allowed to dispose of it to the highest bidder in the markets of the world. According to the Navigation Acts, tobacco was one of the "enumerated items" that must be exported only to the British Isles, whence more than half of it was reexported to other places. The laws also prohibited the growing of tobacco in the British Isles, but protection against competition in the mother country did not quite offset the disadvantages of the colonial planter.

He usually sold his annual crop to an English merchant (or after the mid-eighteenth century to a Scottish merchant) either directly or through a factor in the colonies, and the merchant credited him with its value, after deducting charges for shipping, insurance, and a merchant's commission. Through the merchant he bought slaves and manufactured goods, and

the merchant deducted the cost of these from the planter's credit on the books. After tobacco prices had begun to fall, the planter often found at the end of a year that his crop did not pay for all the goods he had ordered in return. The merchant then carried him until the next year and charged interest on the extension of credit. As the years went by, the planter went more and more deeply into debt, eventually leaving his indebtedness to his heirs.

The colonial merchant in such ports as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia did not have the same difficulties as the tobacco planter, though he had others of his own. He was favored by the Navigation Acts, passed in 1650 and after, which excluded foreign ships from practically all of the colonial carrying trade. And he found a market in England for the furs, timber, naval stores, and vessels produced in the Northern colonies. But he could not profitably sell in England all the fish, flour, wheat, and meat which the colonies produced for export. He had to find other markets for these commodities if he was to obtain adequate means of paying for his imports from England. Wherever he traded, his profits would be reduced if he obeyed the laws and paid the duties imposed on most of the colonial goods that went to England and on all the European goods that went through England to the colonies.

In the English island colonies of the West Indies the colonial merchant found a ready outlet for mainland products. In the French, Dutch, and Spanish islands of the Caribbean he also got eager customers—and often better prices. Responding to pressure from English sugar planters, who wished to monopolize the

mainland trade, Parliament in the Molasses Act of 1733 put a high duty on foreign sugar taken to the continental colonies. The molasses duty was intended to discourage commerce with the foreign islands. But the Northern merchant could evade the tax by smuggling, and he often did.

From the ports of New England and the middle colonies went cargo after cargo of lumber, horses, wheat, flour, biscuits, corn, peas, potatoes, fruit, beef, pork, bacon, and fish. From the West Indies were obtained sugar, molasses, rum, dyewoods, cotton, ginger, coffee, Spanish coins and bills of exchange (these were drafts drawn by planters in the West Indies on merchants in England; they served much the same purpose as checks drawn on a bank). Sometimes West Indian products were carried directly to England; more commonly they were brought back to American ports, where part was sold in the domestic market and the rest exported to England. These exports, together with bills of exchange and Spanish money, helped to pay for the English goods imported into the thirteen colonies.

To and from England, to and from the West Indies—these were much the most important routes of trade for the Northern merchant. He also worked out a number of routes of indirect trade with the mother country, some of them complex and frequently changing, others fairly stable and somewhat "triangular" in their simplicity. Thus he might direct his ships to Catholic southern Europe with fish, then to England with wine and other proceeds in cash or bills of exchange, and then back home with manufactured goods.

## **Aspects of Society**

In provincial America the generous economic basis of life supported a society in which the benefits of physical well-being were more widely diffused than anywhere else in the world. It was a comparatively open society, in which people had more opportunity than elsewhere to rise in economic and social status. Yet it was also a society with great inequalities, one that offered only hardship and poverty to many

of its members and especially to those of African descent.

### **THE CLASS STRUCTURE**

In England, as in Europe, class lines were sharply marked during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The chances for any Eng-

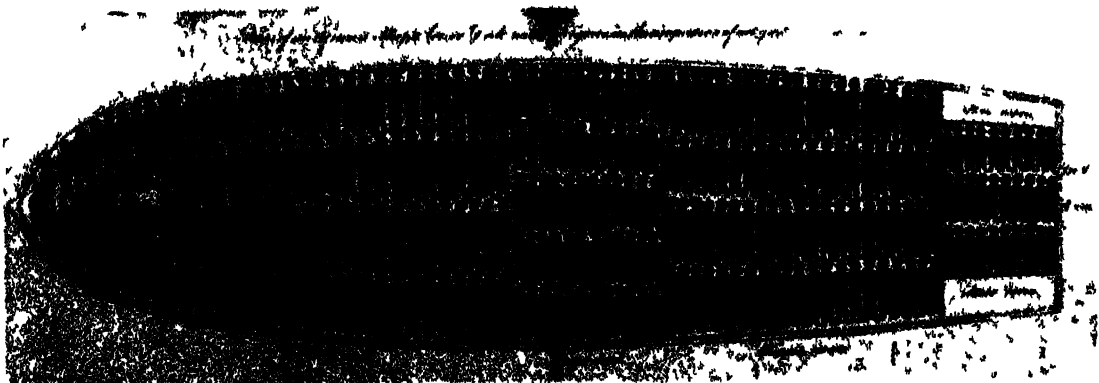


#### A Slave Coffle

A slave ship off the African coast awaits her cargo. One slave trader wrote: 'The negroes are so wilful and loth to leave their own country that they have often leap'd out of the canoos boat and ship'd in to the sea and kept under water till they were drowned to avoid being taken up and saved by our boats.' The historian Philip D. Curtin has estimated that between 1701 and 1810 more than 6 million slaves from Africa arrived in North and South America. Of these fewer than 350 000 (less than 6 per cent) went to the British mainland colonies of North America or to the United States. Illustration from *Freedman's National and Family Record* (1873) (Library of Congress)

#### A Slave Ship

The plan of the *Brookes*, an eighteenth century English vessel built especially for the slave trade, shows how little space was wasted. Pictured here is only one of two lower decks. The slaves were packed in so tightly that they had no room to stand or even to sit. During part of the day (except in bad weather) they were allowed on the main deck to get food and exercise. (New York Public Library)



lishman to rise above the station of his father and grandfather were rather slim—unless he went to America.

In the colonies the English class arrangement was not reproduced. Few or none of the nobility became colonists, though some of them were colonial enterprisers. A relatively small number of untitled gentlemen and a great many members of the middle and lower orders migrated to Virginia, Massachusetts, and other colonies. Some of these arrivals doubtless hoped to reconstruct in America something like the social system they had known in England, only here they hoped to occupy the higher levels themselves. A fortunate few did acquire extensive landholdings and proceeded to mimic the aristocrats back home, but no true aristocracy was transplanted to the colonies.

A colonial class system nevertheless grew up. Once social differentiation was well developed, as it was by the middle of the eighteenth century, the upper classes in the colonies consisted of the royal officials, the proprietary families, the great landholders in the North and the planters in the South, and the leading merchants with their investments mostly in forms of property other than land. The middle classes included most of the landowning farmers and, in the towns, the lesser merchants, shopkeepers, ship captains, professional men, and self-employed artisans. The lower classes comprised the indentured servants and the poorest farmers, together with the comparatively small number of wage earners, including farm hands, sailors, and fishermen. Forming a separate class or caste, though often working in the fields alongside white servants and even alongside men of the master class, were the Negro slaves, the lowliest of all.

All except the slaves could aspire to a higher place for themselves or at least for their children. Once a man had made a fortune, he was usually accepted by those who theretofore had considered him their social inferior. The colonists, believing in enterprise and material success, honored the self-made man. Afterward his descendants were inclined to forget the humble and even grubby origins of the family fortune and to think of themselves as thoroughgoing aristocrats. For example, one of the "first families" of eighteenth-century Virginia, the Byrds, enjoyed a fortune that William Byrd I had put together in the seventeenth century by

selling pots, pans, guns, and rum to the Indians in exchange for furs and hides, as well as by dealing in Indian and African slaves.

Class consciousness and class distinctions came to be quite noticeable in provincial America. Usually a person's place in society was obvious from his appearance and dress. An ordinary farmer in his coarse linen homespun or a town craftsman in his leather apron made a sharp contrast with a planter or merchant in buckle shoes, knee breeches, colorful waistcoat, starched ruffles, and powdered wig. A farm girl, her faced parched by winter fire or summer sun, her buxom figure clothed in homemade linsey-woolsey, was not likely to be mistaken for a planter's or merchant's daughter, whose delicate form was clad in imported silks and satins, and whose complexion was protected by a dainty parasol.

As some of the rich grew richer, some of the poor became more impoverished. There was a widening of extremes. If many of the early indentured servants acquired valuable land and respectable status after completing their servitude, many of the later ones either took up subsistence farming on the frontier or sank to the level of the "poor whites" on worn-out lands in the neighborhood of the planters. Yet, especially in New England, the vast majority of the people came to form a self-respecting, property-owning middle class.

A few humanitarians began to take note of what they considered the wrongs of the society they knew. Of these reformers the foremost was a New Jersey Quaker, John Woolman, who wrote appealingly and traveled widely in a patient effort to better the condition of workers, especially slaves. In *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (Part I, 1754; Part II, 1762) he took up an antislavery crusade which had been preached before him, but never so earnestly.

The pleas of Woolman and other reformers did little to soften the institution of slavery, which during the first half of the eighteenth century had become more and more rigid, with slave codes that were more and more severe. This was especially true in South Carolina, where whites had reason to fear the blacks who greatly outnumbered them. There, slave conspiracies or mere rumors of them brought savage retribution and further tightenings of the already strict laws governing slavery. Near

Charleston several slaves accused of conspiring to revolt were burned to death in 1720. In the city itself fifty were hanged in 1740, and when a disastrous fire followed, two more were executed for arson.

Such events were not confined to the South. In New York City a Negro insurrection led in 1712 to the execution of twenty-one participants, one of whom was chained up without food or drink until he died. Again, in 1741, 101 Negroes were convicted of plotting with poor whites to burn the city; 18 of the blacks were hanged, 13 burned alive, and the rest banished; 4 whites, 2 of them women, went to the gallows. Even in New England, where slaves were relatively few and slavery relatively mild, there

were occasional instances of blacks attacking whites. In 1723 several Negroes were suspected of starting a series of fires in Boston, and in 1741 a black man and woman schemed to set the torch to neighboring Charlestown. But the threat from Negroes caused no mass hysteria or wholesale vengeance in New England.

## HOME AND FAMILY

From the beginning, the family shelters of the colonists were fairly close imitations of those already familiar to them, yet houses (like almost everything else) were more or less altered

### Westover

*In 1688 William Byrd I began the construction of a house on land he had bought along the James River, not far from the place where Richmond, Virginia, later was to be located. His son, the brilliant William Byrd II, lived here during much of his life (when he was not in England). In 1749 the house burned down, and William Byrd III had it rebuilt. He failed, however, to maintain the fortune his father and grandfather had accumulated, and eventually the estate passed out of the family's possession. A French traveler, the Marquis de Chastellux, who was a guest at Westover in 1782, wrote: "There are magnificent houses at every view, for the banks of the James River form the garden of Virginia. That of Mrs. Byrd surpasses them all in the magnificence of the buildings, the beauty of its situation, and the pleasures of society." Westover is one of the finest examples of the Georgian style, as applied to domestic architecture, in America. (Photograph by Thomas T. Waterman, Library of Congress)*



by Americanizing trends. The first English pioneers built thatched huts rather than log cabins of the kind now considered peculiarly American. Introduced by the early Swedish settlers along the Delaware, the log cabin did not become the typical frontier dwelling until the eighteenth century. By that time a variety of building materials and architectural styles had appeared in the older settled areas. Though a higher proportion of colonial than of English houses were built of wood, a considerable number were built of stone or brick, some of which was imported. In New England a common type of farmhouse was the "salt-box," two stories high in front and one in back, and sided with unpainted clapboards. In the middle colonies the redbrick house with a Dutch gambrel roof and the substantial farmhouse of native stone were characteristic. In the South the more prosperous planters erected Georgian mansions, which as a rule were copies of English models, reduced in size and simplified in ornament.

Crowded into the generally small houses were comparatively large families, at least in the early years of settlement. The family often included not only numerous children but also a varying number of dependent relatives, such as elderly grandparents or unmarried aunts. The household was further enlarged in many cases by the presence of servants, domestic slaves, or hired hands living under the same roof.

As head of the household, the father traditionally wielded strong authority over its members. He was entitled to whatever property his wife had owned before her marriage to him, but he was responsible also for her debts and misdeeds. The position of women, however, was somewhat higher in the colonies than in the homeland. Since they were relatively scarce, colonial women were proportionately valued for reasons of supply and demand. They were, for instance, more free than Englishwomen to travel about without male escorts or female chaperones, though Sarah Knight's journey from Boston to New York by herself (1704) was rather exceptional, at least in regard to distance.

In the life of the colonial family there was much more than congeniality and companionship to hold a married couple together. The family as a unit performed many functions which, since that time, have been taken over

by business enterprises or by the state. It had economic functions as the producer of most of what its members consumed. It performed educational services, many a child learning his ABCs at his mother's knee from the family Bible. The family served as a welfare agency in caring for the aged, the unemployable, and the sick. It was even a defense organization, at least on the frontier, where the lonely farmstead became a fortress to be manned by the whole family at the sound of the war-whoop. Having all these forces of cohesion, families were rarely broken, except by death. Divorces were seldom sought and, except in New England, were difficult or impossible to obtain. Occasionally, it is true, husbands deserted or wives absconded, as advertisements in contemporary newspapers reveal.

Nevertheless, the patriarchal family, with its enlarged household, proved difficult to maintain under the conditions of life in eighteenth-century America. Here, where land was so much more abundant and labor so much scarcer than in England, separate and smaller families could manage to survive much more easily. "Dependent kin, servants, and sons soon left the patriarchal household, setting up their own reduced establishments which would never grow to the old proportions," as the historian Bernard Bailyn has observed. Elders were shocked by what seemed to them the breakup of the very foundation of the social order. In a futile effort to restore parental authority, the colonies passed laws demanding obedience from children and providing severe penalties for filial disrespect.

Immorality in provincial America would be hard to measure. Among their contemporaries in neighboring colonies, the countryfolk of North Carolina had a reputation for loose morals, but as a whole these Carolinians were probably no worse than their critics. The church and court records of New England contain much evidence of premarital relations in that part of the country, but what the evidence most likely proves is that the Puritans were prone to confess their sins and to keep careful records, rather than that these people were especially given to fornication. Furthermore, the Puritan betrothal was itself such a solemn and binding ceremony that some New Englanders doubted whether intercourse between engaged couples was really wrong, and in the

early eighteenth century Harvard students discussed that very question in public debate. In the rural South, as in the rural North, prostitutes were almost unheard of, but in the seaports commercialized vice grew with the growth of commerce itself.

Among indentured servants nonmarital relations were a common evil, or so it was believed—and no doubt correctly, since servants usually were forbidden to marry during their servitude. As for the slaves, their marriages

were not recognized by law, and few masters were as much concerned with the identity of a slave father as they were with the fecundity of a slave mother. The offspring of white fathers and black mothers, and vice versa, began to appear at an early date and, despite the intensification of race prejudice, became more numerous as time went on. Though indentured servants were blamed for the racial intermixture, men of the master class were responsible for much of it.

## The Mind and Spirit

The new scientific spirit of the Enlightenment was quite out of keeping with old beliefs, such as the notion of witchcraft or even the idea of a personal God who kept watch over individual lives. Nevertheless old attitudes persisted and often were intermingled with the new. In provincial America the diverging points of view were represented by two outstanding figures: Benjamin Franklin, a superb example of the Enlightenment man, and Jonathan Edwards, a latter-day expounder of the old-time Puritan faith. Yet Edwards, along with many other religious leaders, also shared the growing interest in science and reason.

### THE PATTERN OF RELIGIONS

Though originating abroad, religions developed a new and distinctive pattern in America. With the immigration of diverse sectarians from several countries, the colonies became an ecclesiastical patchwork made up of a great variety of churches. Toleration flourished to a degree remarkable for the time, not because it was deliberately sought but because conditions favored its growth. No single religious establishment predominated in the colonies as the Church of England did in the British Isles and as other state churches, Lutheran or Roman Catholic, did in Western Europe.

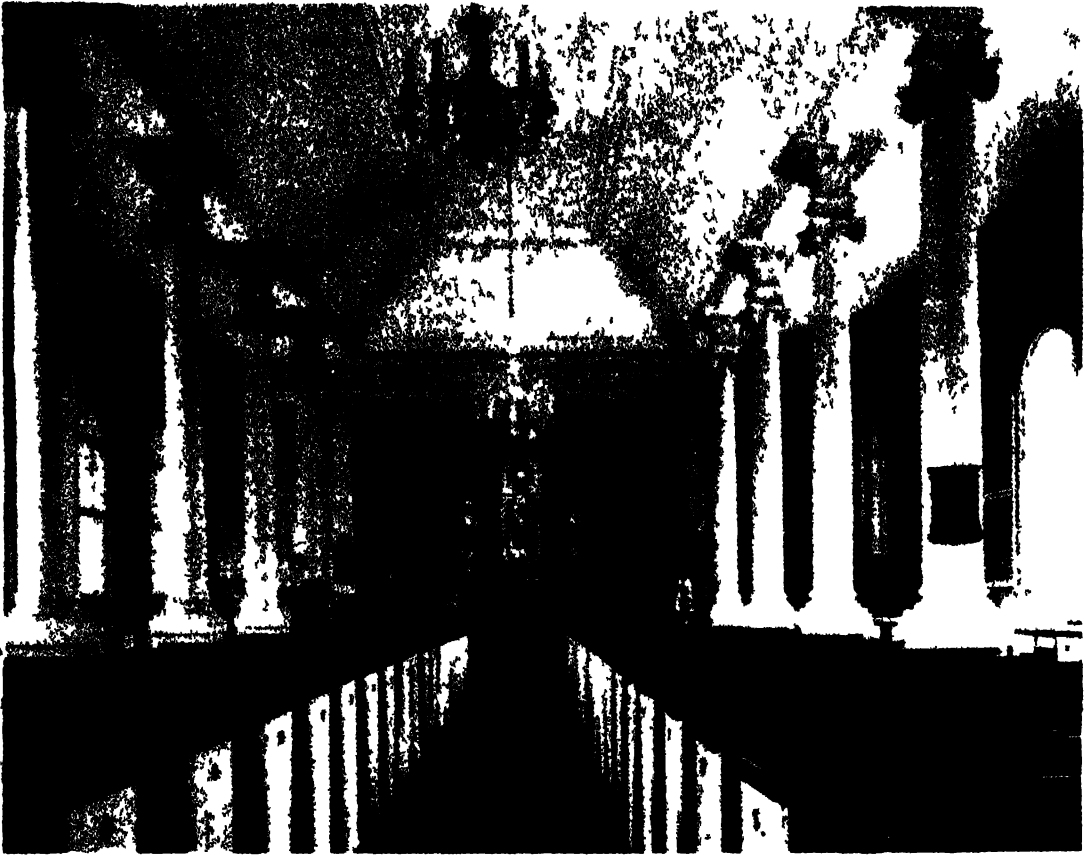
By law, the Church of England was established in Virginia, Maryland, New York, the Carolinas, and Georgia. In these colonies everyone regardless of belief or affiliation was

supposed to be taxed for the support of the Church. Actually, except in Virginia and Maryland, the Church of England succeeded in maintaining its position as the established church only in certain localities.

To strengthen Anglicanism in America, the Bishop of London began in 1689 to delegate the supervision of the colonial churches to his personal representatives, or commissaries. When the first commissary, James Blair, was appointed in Virginia, more than half of the parishes in the colony had no minister. When Blair died in 1743, after more than fifty years of devoted labor, there were only two unsupplied parishes.

Further to strengthen Anglicanism, in America and elsewhere, the Church of England in 1701 set up the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Missionaries of the SPG founded a number of new Anglican communions in the colonies, especially in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Seeing that Anglicanism in America was handicapped by the lack of a bishop, the missionaries agitated for the appointment of one. But Congregationalists and others opposed this as a step toward tyranny, and the Anglican clergy of Virginia and Maryland agreed with them. No bishop was appointed.

Not all the Puritans were Congregationalists: some of them became Presbyterians. In belief, these two groups were essentially the same, but they differed in ecclesiastical organization, the Presbyterians having a more highly centralized government, with a governing body of presbyters (made up of ministers and



#### **Christ Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

*Peter Harrison, who designed Christ Church, has been called "America's first architect." Born in England, Harrison became a ship captain when only twenty-three. He married an American woman with considerable property and prospered as a merchant of Newport, Rhode Island. In versatility, though not in genius, he rivaled Benjamin Franklin. He was not a jack of all trades, according to his biographer Carl Bridenbaugh, but was "rather a master of ten—ship-handling, navigation, ship-building, woodcarving, drafting, cartography, surveying, military engineering and construction, commerce, and the new agriculture," in addition to architecture. He acquired the largest and best selected architectural library in colonial America. Among the notable structures he designed were King's Chapel in Boston, Touro Synagogue in Newport, St. Michael's in Charleston, and Christ Church in Cambridge. The building committee for Christ Church insisted upon the most simple and inexpensive construction. Though he did not manage to keep within the cost limit, Harrison succeeded in creating a charmingly original design, in the spirit of the late Georgian style, at a remarkably low cost. On the interior, he produced an effect of considerable spaciousness for so small a church by leaving out the usual gallery, or balcony, on each side. (Library of Congress)*

lay elders) for the churches of each district. In the early 1700s many of the Puritan churches of Connecticut, and most of those founded in other colonies by emigrants from New England, adopted the Presbyterian form of govern-

ment. The number of Presbyterians in America was greatly increased by the immigration of the Scotch-Irish. At first, most of these people lacked churches and pastors. Francis Makemie, often called the father of Presbyterianism



in America, organized the first American presbytery (1705) and for twenty years traveled up and down the coast from New York to South Carolina to set up churches for the churchless.

Another Calvinist group, numerous in parts of New York and New Jersey, was the Dutch Reformed. Originally the American Baptists, of whom Roger Williams is considered the first, were also Calvinistic in their theology. Then, in Rhode Island and in other colonies, a bewildering variety of Baptist sects sprang up. They had in common a belief that infant baptism did not suffice and that rebaptism, usually by total immersion, was necessary. Some remained Calvinists, believers in predestination, and others came to believe in salvation by man's free will.

Quite different from the Calvinists were the Quaker mystics and the German pietists, such as the Mennonites, Dunkers, and Moravians. The Quakers (Society of Friends) abandoned their early enthusiasm, which once had caused them to disturb other religious gatherings when they first settled in America. As their wealth increased, many of the Friends lost still more of their old-time fervor, the rich Philadelphia merchants dividing their allegiance between meeting house and counting house. Though politically dominant in Pennsylvania from the beginning, the Quakers did not use their power to compel conformity. Of all the colonies, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania were characterized by the greatest religious diversity and freedom. In Pennsylvania and other places where Germans settled, the Lutherans as well as the pietist sects added variety to the colonial religious scene.

Protestants extended toleration to one another more readily than to Roman Catholics. To strict Puritans the Pope seemed no less than Antichrist. Their border enemies in New France, being "papists," seemed agents to the devil bent on frustrating the divine mission of the wilderness Zion in New England. In most of the English colonies, however, the Roman Catholics were far too small a minority to occasion serious conflict. They were most numerous in Maryland, and even there they numbered no more than 3,000. Ironically, they suffered their worst persecution in that colony, which had been founded as a refuge for them and had been distinguished by its Toleration Act of 1649. According to Maryland laws passed after 1691, Catholics not only were deprived of

political rights but also were forbidden to hold religious services except in private houses.

Even fewer than the Catholics, the Jews in provincial America totaled no more than about 2,000 at any time. The largest community lived in New York City, smaller groups in Newport and Charleston, and dispersed families in all the colonies. There was relatively little social discrimination against the Jews, but there was political discrimination: in no colony could they vote or hold office. In New England they enjoyed a certain esteem because of the Puritans' interest in the Old Testament and in Hebrew culture.

## THE GREAT AWAKENING

During the early 1700s the pious outlook gave way more and more to a worldly view. With the westward movement and the wide scattering of the colonial population, many of the frontiersmen lost touch with organized religion. With the rise of towns and the multiplication of material comforts, the inhabitants of the more densely settled areas were inclined toward an increasingly secular outlook. With the appearance of numerous and diverse sects, some people were tempted to doubt whether any particular denomination, even their own, possessed a monopoly of truth and grace. And with the progress of science and free thought in Europe, at least a few Americans began to adopt a rational and skeptical philosophy.

For thousands of the colonists, the trend away from religion was reversed by a revival movement known as the Great Awakening, which reached a climax in the 1740s. Wandering exhorters from abroad did much to stimulate the revivalistic spirit. John and Charles Wesley, founders of Methodism, which began as a reform movement within the Church of England, visited Georgia and other colonies in the 1730s with the intention of revitalizing religion and converting Indians and Negroes. George Whitefield, a powerful open-air preacher from England and for a time an associate of the Wesleys, made several evangelizing tours through the colonies. Everywhere he went, Whitefield drew tremendous crowds, and it was said (with some exaggeration) that he could make his hearers weep merely by uttering, in his moving way, the word "Mesopotamia."

**"Sinners  
in the Hands  
of an Angry  
God"  
[1741]**

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758) was the most original and systematic theologian of colonial America. Edwards argued that God's grace is the only way that any man can be redeemed from the original sin committed by Adam; poor sinners could yield themselves up to God's grace if their hearts were "filled with love to him who has loved them." The extremes of terror and salvation that he posed were undeniably effective when he preached this sermon at Enfield, Connecticut, in 1741; it produced great "breathing of distress, and weeping."

*Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell, and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf.*

*O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of God. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder.*

*And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in the door calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners.*

*And let everyone that is yet out of Christ, and hanging over the pit of hell, now hearken to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the Lord, a day of such great favours to some will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others.*

Though itinerants like Whitefield contributed to the rousing of religious excitement, the Great Awakening could hardly have occurred without the work of regular ministers with an evangelizing bent. One of the most important of these was Theodore J. Frelinghuysen, a youthful German-born pastor of three Dutch Reformed congregations in central New Jersey. Frelinghuysen preached the necessity of spiritual rebirth not only to the Dutch Reformed but also to the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian settlers of the Raritan Valley. His emotional preaching divided his own parishioners. The older and more well-to-do among them were scandalized; the young and the poor rallied to his support.

The Puritans of New England also were divided on the issue of revivalism. A majority of the Congregational ministers of Massachusetts denounced the "errors" and "disorders" arising from revival meetings. Among the errors and disorders was the practice of uneducated men "taking upon themselves to be preachers of the word of God," creating confusion and tumult, and leading members away from their regular churches.

Yet the outstanding preacher of the Great Awakening in New England was Jonathan

Edwards—a Puritan of the Puritans and one of the most profound theologians in the history of American religious thought. From his pulpit in Northampton, Massachusetts, Edwards attacked the new doctrines of easy salvation for all. He called upon his people to return to the faith of their fathers. He preached afresh the old Puritan ideas of the absolute sovereignty of God, the depravity of man, predestination, the necessity of experiencing a sense of election, and election by God's grace alone. Describing hell as vividly as if he had been there, he brought his listeners to their knees in terror of divine wrath. Day after day the agonized sinners crowded his parsonage to seek his aid; at least one committed suicide.

The Great Awakening spread over the colonies like a religious epidemic. It was most contagious in frontier areas and among the comparatively poor and uneducated folk, especially in the South. In the Southern back country it affected the largest number of people, prevailed the longest, and had the most lasting consequences. The Presbyterian Church was split by the formation of a large and rapidly growing group of revivalistic, "New Light" Presbyterians. Converts flocked to various free-will Baptist sects; the Baptists were on

the way to eventually becoming one of the two most numerous denominations in the United States.

The Great Awakening not only led to the division of existing congregations and the founding of new sects, but it also had a number of other results. Some of the revivalists denounced book learning as a snare and a delusion, a positive hindrance to salvation, but others saw education as a means of furthering their own brand of religion, and so they founded schools for the preparation of ministers. Many believed that revivalism, through its emphasis on righteous conduct, brought about an improvement in manners and morals, and no doubt it did so, at least temporarily. To some extent, too, it aroused a spirit of humanitarianism, a concern for the physical as well as the spiritual welfare of the poor and oppressed. The widely preached doctrine of salvation for all—of equal opportunity to share in God's grace—encouraged the notion of equal rights to share also in the good things on earth. Thus it stimulated feelings of democracy.

Though the Great Awakening had these important and lasting consequences, many of the converted soon backslid, and by the end of the colonial period English America contained fewer church members for its population than did any other Christian country of the time, and fewer than the United States has today.

## READING AND WRITING

As an American variant of English culture developed in the colonies, it was reflected in the partial Americanization of the English language. New words originated in borrowings from the Indians (such as *skunk* and *squash*), from the French (*portage*, *prairie*), and from the Dutch (*boss*, *cooky*). Americanisms also arose from the combining of words already in the English language (*bull-frog*, *snow-plow*), from the formation of new adjectives based on existing nouns (*kinky*, *chunky*), from the adoption of unfamiliar uses for familiar words (*branch*, meaning *stream*; *ordinary*, meaning *inn*), and from the retention of old English expressions that were being dropped in England (*cater-corner*; *bub*, for *boy*). After 1700 English travelers in America began to notice a strangeness in accent as well as vocabulary,

and in 1756 the great lexicographer Dr. Samuel Johnson mentioned the existence of an "American dialect."

Dr. Johnson thought of Americans as barbarians, and some no doubt were, but from the beginning many had been concerned lest civilization be lost in the wilderness. They continued to provide schooling for their children as best they could, particularly in New England. In various colonies, the advancement of religion being one motive for education, the Quakers and other sects operated church schools. Here and there a widow or an unmarried woman conducted a "dame school," holding private classes in her home. In some of the cities master craftsmen set up evening schools for their apprentices, at least a hundred such schools appearing between 1723 and 1770. To the end of the colonial period (and beyond it) numberless children with no school available were still learning to read and write from their father or mother at the family fireside.

Far more people learned to read than ever attended school, yet a great many never learned to read at all. The literacy rate, which is unknown, must have varied a good deal from place to place. It seems to have been very low in some of the thinly settled areas, especially in the South. It was highest in the towns, especially in New England. Nevertheless, the Connecticut legislature stated in 1690 that many people in Connecticut were "unable to read the English tongue," and of the thirteen town proprietors of Manchester, New Hampshire, in 1716, eight could not write. Colonial wills and other legal documents often were signed with a mark, by people who could not write even their own names. On the whole, literacy doubtless improved during the eighteenth century, and by the time of the Revolution probably a majority of Americans could read.

Books were available in numerous collections. Several of the wealthy colonists owned hundreds of volumes apiece; William Byrd II had one of the largest private libraries, with more than 3,600 volumes, at Westover, his plantation home. A dozen or more subscription libraries were established, most of them in Pennsylvania, and a few small endowed public libraries, one of the earliest at Bath, North Carolina. Harvard College, in 1723, possessed 3,200 volumes. Much the larger proportion of all these books were printed abroad and im-

ported, but several American cities were active book-publishing centers.

Founded in 1704, the first regular newspaper in the colonies, though not a very newsy one, was the weekly *Boston News-Letter*, a small folded sheet of four pages with two columns to a page. By the 1760s one or more weekly papers were being published in each of the colonies except New Jersey and Delaware, both of which were well enough supplied by the presses of New York and Philadelphia. Several monthly magazines, notably the *American Magazine* of Philadelphia, were started after about 1750, with hopes of wide circulation. One after another they appeared for a year or two and then expired. More successful and more widely read were the yearly almanacs. Originally mere collections of weather data, these turned into small magazines of a sort, containing a great variety of literary fare. Poor *Richard's Almanac*, now well remembered, was only one of many, though a superior one.

Its publisher, Benjamin Franklin, was one of a few colonial-born men of letters who wrote works of lasting literary merit. The titles of some of his essays—*Advice to a Young Man on Choosing a Mistress* (1745), *Reflections on Courtship and Marriage* (1746), *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind* (1755), and *Advice to a Young Tradesman* (1762)—suggest his pragmatic and worldly wise outlook. Quite different was the sternly logical and otherworldly view of Jonathan Edwards, whose treatise *On the Freedom of the Will* (1754) is considered, by those who can understand it, as perhaps the most brilliant of American theological studies. John Woolman in his *Journal* (published in 1775, after his death) related a life as spiritual as Edwards' and as humanitarian as Franklin's but more humble and sensitive than either. A writer rivaling Franklin in charm, though not in productivity, was William Byrd II, whose breezy *History of the Dividing Line* (not published till 1841) recounted his experiences as one of the commissioners who, in 1728, marked off the boundary between Virginia and North Carolina.

As a rule, colonial authors had no time for belles-lettres, for fiction, poetry, drama, and the like. Writers concentrated upon sermons, religious tracts, and subjects of urgent, practical concern. Puritans, Quakers, and many other Protestants condemned playacting as sin-

ful. The first theaters opened in the South, one at Williamsburg in 1718 and the famous Dock Street Theater at Charleston in 1736. By the middle of the century plays could be seen in all the larger seaport cities except Boston, where the Puritan ban remained.

## HIGHER LEARNING

Of the six colleges in actual operation by 1763, all but two were founded by religious groups primarily for the training of preachers. Harvard (1636) was established by Congregationalists, William and Mary (1693) by Anglicans, and Yale (1701) by conservative Congregationalists who were dissatisfied with the growing religious liberalism of Harvard. The College of New Jersey (1746), later known as Princeton, was set up by Presbyterians in response to the Great Awakening. At any of these institutions a student with secular interests could derive something of a liberal education from the prevailing curricula, which included logic, ethics, physics, geometry, astronomy, rhetoric, Latin, Hebrew, and Greek. From the beginning Harvard was intended not only to provide an educated ministry but also to "advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity." King's College (1754), afterward Columbia, had no theological faculty and was interdenominational from the start. The Academy and College of Philadelphia (1755), which grew into the University of Pennsylvania, was a completely secular institution, founded by a group of laymen under the inspiration of Benjamin Franklin. It offered courses in utilitarian subjects as well as the liberal arts—in mechanics, chemistry, agriculture, government, commerce, and modern languages. Though the colonies thus were well supplied with colleges, at least in comparison with other countries at the time, some Americans continued to go to English universities. But the great majority of colonial leaders, after 1700, received their entire education in America.

Until a medical school was opened in Philadelphia (1765) there was no opportunity for aspiring physicians to get academic training on this side of the Atlantic. Those who desired to attend a medical school had to go abroad, and usually they went to the University of Edinburgh. Most of the practicing physicians had no

medical degrees. Some put in a sort of internship with an older practitioner, and others took up the healing art entirely on their own. Some colonial physicians and, surprising though it seems, churchmen like Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards advocated as earnestly as anyone in the world the most controversial medical innovation of their time—inoculation against smallpox. There was no law school in the colonies, and men prepared themselves for a legal career by independent study, by working with an established lawyer, or, in comparatively few cases, by attending one of the Inns of Court (law schools) in London.

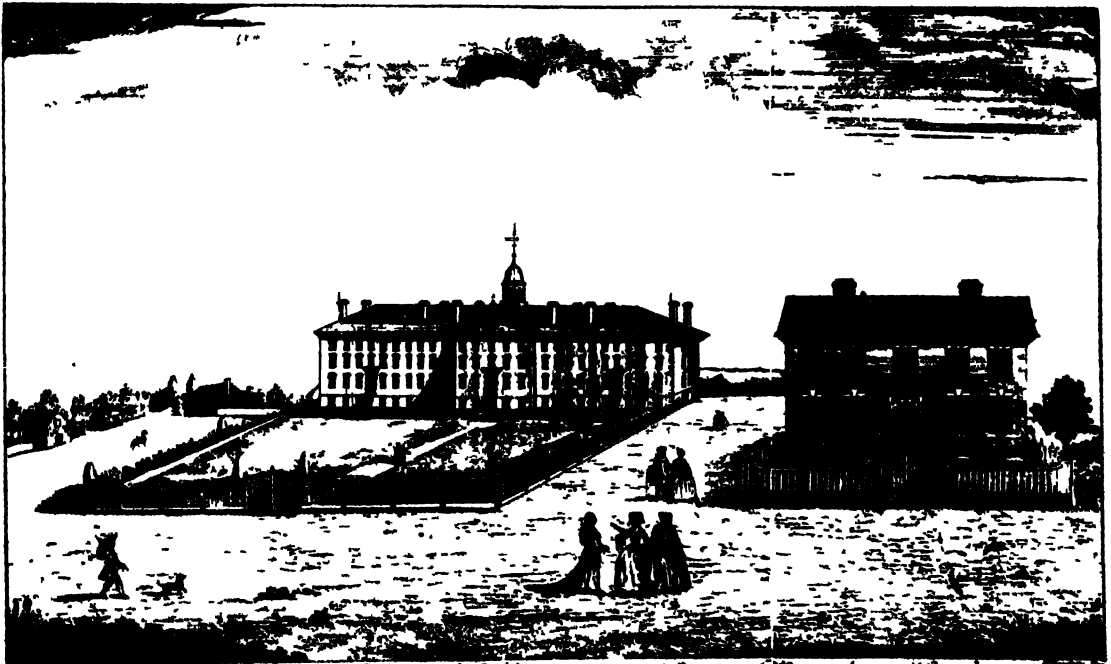
In the colonial colleges, considerable attention was given to scientific subjects. Chairs in “natural philosophy,” or physical science, were endowed at William and Mary and at Harvard. The most advanced scientific thought of Eu-

rope—Copernican astronomy and Newtonian physics—eventually made its way into American teaching. But scientific speculation and experiment were not the exclusively academic, professional occupations that they later became.

Mather, Edwards, and many other ministers, merchants, and planters in America were active as amateur scientists. The Royal Society of London, founded in 1662 for the advancement of science, honored a number of them by electing them as fellows. To this society the American members and nonmember correspondents sent samples and descriptions of plants, animals, and remarkable phenomena. By means of their contributions the colonial amateurs added a good deal to the accumulation of data upon which later scientific progress was to be based. They also sent in plans for

#### Nassau Hall at Princeton

At the left is Nassau Hall, completed in 1756, ten years after the founding of the College of New Jersey (which became Princeton University in 1896). It is the oldest building now standing on the Princeton campus. At the right is the president's house. From a drawing made in 1763. (Princeton University Library)



*A North-West Prospect of Nassau-Hall with a Front View of the President's House in New-Jersey*

mechanical inventions and helped to start the reputation of Americans as a mechanically ingenious people.

Though women were excluded from the colleges and the professions, a few of them gained the equivalent of a higher education through their own exertions. Notable examples were Abigail Smith (who married John Adams) and Mercy Otis (who married James Warren), both of whom belonged to learned, book-loving Massachusetts families. Relying on traditional cures and Indian remedies, most women served as nurses and, to some extent, even as doctors within their own households. Midwives delivered babies. At least one woman, Mrs. Hannah Williams of South Carolina, emulated the men who were making modest contributions to science. As early as 1705 she was collecting specimens of "some of our vipers and several sorts of snakes, scorpions, and lizards," besides insects, wild bees' nests, and various kinds of native plants.

The greatest of colonial scientists and inventors, Benjamin Franklin, gained worldwide fame with his kite experiment (1752) which demonstrated that lightning and electricity are one and the same. Showing their respect for experimental science, Harvard, Yale, and William and Mary honored themselves by honoring Franklin as a Master of Arts. The University of St. Andrews in Scotland and Oxford University in England conferred doctoral degrees upon him. Thereafter he took satisfaction in being known as "Dr. Franklin." He interested himself in countless subjects besides electricity, and he was a theoretical or "philosophical" scientist as well as a practical one. He also was a promoter of science. In 1727 he and his Philadelphia friends organized the Junto, a club for the discussion of intellectual and practical matters of mutual interest. In 1744 he led in the founding of the American Philosophical Society, the first learned society in America.

## CONCEPTS OF LAW

As with social and intellectual life, the legal and political institutions inherited from England also were more or less modified in their transmission to the colonies. Changes in the law resulted in part from the scarcity of English-trained lawyers, who were almost unknown in America before 1700. Not till a generation after that did the authorities in England make a deliberate effort to impose the common law and the statutes of the realm upon the provinces. By that time the legal standards on this side of the ocean had become pretty well fixed, and a number of variant legal systems had come into being through a lack of acquaintance or sympathy with English law, though all these systems embodied many of its essentials, including such ancient rights as trial by jury.

Pleading and court procedure were simplified in America, and punishments were made less severe. Instead of the gallows or the prison, the colonists more commonly resorted to the whipping post, the branding iron, the stocks, and the ducking stool (for gossiping women). Crimes were redefined. In England a printed attack on a public official, whether true or false, was considered libelous. In the colonies, at the trial (1734) of the New York publisher John Peter Zenger, who was powerfully defended by the Philadelphia lawyer Andrew Hamilton, it was held that criticisms of the government were not libels if factually true—a verdict that brought some progress toward freedom of the press. Legal philosophy itself was changed as colonists came to think of law as a reflection of the divine will or the natural order, not as an expression of the power of an earthly sovereign. Provincial lawyers, who became an influential class during the eighteenth century, were less closely attached to English tradition than the legal profession in the United States was afterward to be.

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\*Titles available in paperback

# The Empire Under Strain

## PENNSYLVANIA AND WEEKLY ADVER

EXPIRING In Hopes of a Resurrection



I am sorry to be obliged to acquaint my Readers, that as The *Strain* Act, I fear'd to be obligatory upon us after the *Fight of November* ensuing, (the *Fatal* To-morrow) the Publisher of this Paper unable to bear the Burthen, has thought it expedient to stop a while, in order to deliberate, whether any Methods can be found to elude the Law forced for us, and oblige the innumerable Slavery, which it is hoped, from the just Representations now made against that Act, may be effected. Mean while, I must earnestly Request every Individual of my Subscribers, many of whom have been long behind Hand, that they would immediately Discharge their respective Arrears, that I may be able, not only to support myself during the Interval, but be better prepared to proceed again with this Paper, whenever an opening for that Purpose appears, which I hope will be soon.

WILLIAM BRADFORD.

Remember, O my friends! the Laws, the Rights,  
The glorious Plan of Freedom, which I dream,  
From day to day, in your favour I have sworn;  
O let it never cease to be your shield!  
The whole of Liberty, in your hands,  
O let it never cease to be your shield!  
O let it never cease to be your shield!

Remember, O my friends! the Laws, the Rights,  
The glorious Plan of Freedom, which I dream,  
From day to day, in your favour I have sworn;  
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O let it never cease to be your shield!  
O let it never cease to be your shield!

And in all political Disputes the more contested by it under them, so much the worse are they, and so much the worse are we for them. It is a very happy Circumstance attending public Virtue and public Spirit, that the more it is vitiated, the more illustrious it always appears. No Patriotism formed against it can prosper, for it at once derides and confutes the darkest and most inveterate Calumny. But although public Virtue cannot be affected by the Indulgence of the most unlimited Freedom of speaking or writing, yet Oppression and Tyranny as it derives all its Influence from its Secrecy, may be extremely benefited by the Reverse. For this reason, in Countries subjected to the insatiable Demands of Power and Avarice, the first Attempts to inspire People with just Sense of their Condition, are commonly met in the Bed. It is of the last Importance to the Views of designing Men to shut up the most successful and universal Channel of Information from the People, when they are forming such Schemes as need only to be known in order to be opposed. Besides the Deprivation of our whole Liberty may be justified on the same Principles as the Deprivation of any individual Part, such as the Liberty of the Press undoubtedly is.

How valuable is the Enjoyment of Liberty! But how deplorable are the Bonds of Servitude! It is therefore anxiously to be hoped, that the old New-England Spirit of exemplary firmness in former Times, will never condescend to Submission to now and unwarrantable Restrictions.

A Day, an Hour of virtuous Liberty, is worth a whole Eternity in Bondage. May we all as loyal Subjects, and free born Britons exert our utmost to preserve the Rights and Liberties of our Country, in a Manner that shall add Honour to our Nation; that future Posterity may reap the Benefit and bless the Hands which were the Instruments of preserving it.

Then Glory then, the brightest Crown of Princes,  
Which every Lover of his Country's Wealth,  
And every Patron of Mankind desires;  
Will gratefully adore from Patriot's Deeds,  
And leave behind an Honour that will last  
With Faith immortal to the End of Time.

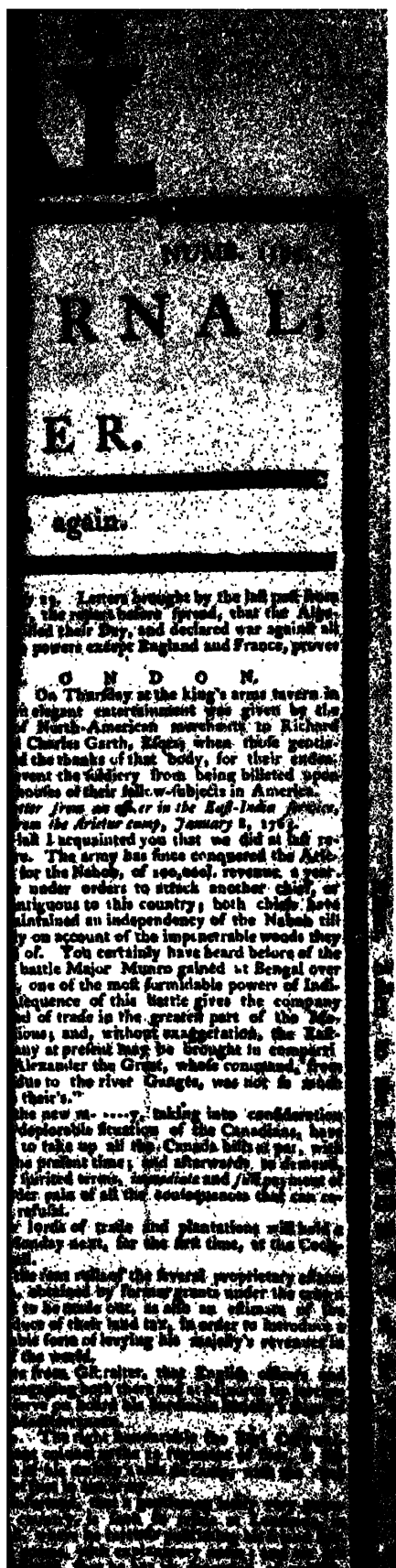
Flourish last arrived here the *Ship Philadelphia Packet*, Capt. Sander, from London, who has saved the *Ship* *Swallow*.

A O S E, The 30.  
The 30th of the month, the country hath been visited by a severe frost. The wind hath changed the temperature of the air, and the ground is now covered with snow. The frost is very severe, and the wind is very strong. The ground is now covered with snow, and the frost is very severe. The wind is very strong, and the ground is now covered with snow.

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## Four



Looking back two centuries later, it is easy enough to see that the people of the thirteen colonies, for all their diversity, had come to share some distinctive characteristics by the middle of the eighteenth century. From the point of view of England at that time, these people seemed already to be Americans rather than, in a strict sense, Englishmen. As yet, however, few of the colonists thought of themselves as Americans. Their "country," as they saw it, was first of all their particular colony, and then perhaps their region (at least in the case of Southerners and New Englanders), and finally the British Empire.

As of 1763 the Empire appeared to be an imposing success, having just disposed of its last great imperial rival in America—France. Yet it was about to prove a failure, at least so far as its ability to hold the thirteen colonies was concerned. After the great victory over the French, the policy makers in London undertook to bind the outlying provinces more closely than ever to the metropolitan center. Instead of consolidating the Empire, however, its rulers unwittingly prepared the way for its early disruption.

The colonies by then had long been used to a large measure of self-rule, and to preserve this they resisted the imperial program of George III's government. In the course of their resistance they developed a new sense of common cause and new forms of political cooperation. They were not yet conscious of belonging to, or of desiring to create, a separate country, but they eventually found themselves engaged in the first battles of a war that was to lead to independence.

War came in consequence of a real clash of interests, economic and political, between the groups dominant in England and those dominant in the colonies. This conflict was the result of a century and a half of

### Response to the Stamp Act

This issue of a Pennsylvania newspaper, for October 31, 1765, has the heavy black rules and the death's head insignia as signs of mourning—mourning for the loss of popular liberties as a result of the Stamp Act and for the death of the paper itself, which is ceasing publication rather than pay the tax. (New York Public Library)

divergence in the development of English and American ways. As the historian Charles M. Andrews has said, "New soil had produced

new wants, new desires, new points of view, and the colonists were demanding the right to live their own lives in their own way."

## A Loosening of Ties

After England's Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the collapse of the Dominion of New England, the English government (or, after 1707, the British government when Great Britain was created by the union of England and Scotland) made no serious or sustained effort for more than seventy years to tighten its control over the colonies. During that time, it is true, additions were made to the list of royal colonies (New Jersey, 1702; North and South Carolina, 1729; Georgia, 1754) until they numbered eight, in all of which the King had the power of appointing governors and other colonial officials. During that time, also, Parliament passed new laws supplementing the original Navigation Acts and elaborating on the mercantilist program—laws restricting colonial manufactures, prohibiting paper currency, and regulating trade. Nevertheless, the British government itself remained uncertain and divided about the extent to which it ought to interfere in colonial affairs. The colonies were left, within broad limits, to go their separate ways, and they were able to assert fairly extensive rights of self-government.

### TOWARD SELF-RULE

During the first half of the eighteenth century, though the colonies continued to be governed in the King's name, Parliament more and more asserted its supremacy over the King. Theoretically Parliament represented the interests of the whole kingdom and indeed the whole Empire. Actually it represented best the interests of the great merchants and landholders in England. Most of them objected to any ambitious scheme for imperial reorganization that would require large expenditures, increase taxes, and diminish the profit of the colonial trade.

During the reigns of George I (1714–1727) and George II (1727–1760), both of whom were

German-born, the real executive in England was beginning to be the prime minister and his fellow cabinet ministers, who held their places not by the King's favor but by their ability to control a majority in Parliament. The first of the prime ministers, Robert Walpole, believed that a relaxation of trade restrictions against the colonies would enable them to buy more English goods and would thus benefit England and her merchants. Walpole therefore deliberately refrained from attempting a very strict enforcement of all Navigation Acts. His policy of "salutary neglect" was to continue until after the outbreak of the French and Indian War.

Meanwhile the day-to-day administration of colonial affairs remained decentralized and inefficient. In England there was no separate and full-fledged colonial office. The nearest equivalent was the Board of Trade and Plantations, set up in 1696. The board, a mere advisory body, made recommendations to the Privy Council (the central agency of all administration), while the Privy Council, the war department, the lords of the admiralty, or the treasury officials made most of the actual decisions. All these agencies, except for the board itself, had responsibility for administering laws at home as well as overseas; none could concentrate upon colonial affairs alone. To complicate matters further, there was a certain amount of overlapping and confusion of authority among the departments. And very few of the London officials ever visited America and obtained first-hand knowledge of conditions there.

Some information could be obtained from colonial agents in England. Though the colonists did not elect official representatives to sit in Parliament, some of the assemblies sent unofficial representatives or lobbyists to London to encourage the passage of desired legislation and discourage the enactment of unwanted laws. The best known of these colonial agents, Benjamin Franklin, looked out for the

interests of not only Pennsylvania but also Georgia, New Jersey, and Massachusetts.

The conflicts of administrative authority in London, together with the ministerial policy of salutary neglect, weakened the hold of England upon the colonies, and so did the character of the officials who were sent to America. These included the officials placed in charge of each royal colony – governor, councillors, secretary, attorney general, receiver general, surveyor general, supreme court justices – and the agents of the London administrative departments, such as collectors of customs and naval officers, who were located in all the colonies. Some of these officeholders were able and devoted men, but the majority were not. There being no merit system, appointments often were made on the basis of bribery or favoritism rather than ability or integrity. Many an appointee remained in England and, with part of his salary, hired another man to take his place in America. Such a deputy, poorly paid as he was, found it hard to resist opportunities to augment his income with bribes. For example, a customs collector seldom hesitated, for a fee smaller than the duty itself, to pass the goods of a smuggling colonial merchant. Even honest and well-paid officials, desiring to get along with the people among whom they had to live, usually found it expedient to yield to popular resistance in the colonies.

This resistance to imperial authority centered in the colonial assemblies. By the 1750s they had established the right to levy taxes, make appropriations, approve appointments, and pass laws for their respective colonies. Their legislation was subject to veto by the governor and to disallowance by the Privy Council, but they could often sway the governor by means of their money powers, and they could get around the Privy Council by repassing disallowed laws in slightly altered form. The assemblies came to look upon themselves as little parliaments, each practically as sovereign within its colony as Parliament itself was in England. In 1754 the Board of Trade reported to the King, regarding the members of the New York assembly: They "have wrested from Your Majesty's governor the nomination of all offices of government, the custody and direction of the public military stores, the mustering and direction of troops raised for Your Majesty's service, and in short almost every other part of executive government."

## INTERCOLONIAL DISUNITY

Despite their frequent resistance to British authority and evasion of British laws, the colonists continued to think of themselves as loyal British subjects. They had much to gain from keeping their imperial connection. They enjoyed access to the markets of the Empire, bounties on the production of certain goods, the protection afforded by British naval and military forces, and the pride of belonging to the most powerful aggregation of peoples on the globe.

In some respects the colonists had more in common with Englishmen than with one another. To New Englanders Virginia seemed almost a foreign land, and to Virginians New England was just as strange. A Connecticut man denounced the merchants of New York for their "frauds and unfair practices," while a New Yorker condemned Connecticut because of the "low craft and cunning so incident to the people of that country." An English traveler wrote: "Fire and water are not more heterogeneous than the different colonies in North America."

Meanwhile some developments were laying a basis for the eventual growth of a sense of intercolonial community. The increase of population, which produced an almost continuous line of settlement along the seacoast, brought the people of the various colonies into closer and closer contact, as did the gradual construc-

### The Need for Colonial Unity

*Probably the first American editorial cartoon, this sketch appeared in Benjamin Franklin's newspaper, the Pennsylvania Gazette of Philadelphia, for May 9, 1754. The cartoon was intended to illustrate the need for colonial unity and, in particular, for the adoption of Franklin's Albany Plan.*



tion of roads, the rise of intercolonial trade, and the improvement of the colonial post office. In 1691 the postal service operated only from Massachusetts to New York and Pennsylvania. In 1711 it was extended to New Hampshire on the north, in 1732 to Virginia on the south, and ultimately all the way to Georgia. After 1753 Franklin, a deputy postmaster, improved the service, providing weekly instead of biweekly posts and speeding them up so that, for example, mail was delivered from Boston to Philadelphia in about three weeks instead of six. Post riders carried newspapers as well as letters and thus enlarged and unified the colonial reading public.

Still, the colonists were loath to cooperate even when, in 1754, they faced a new threat from old and dreaded enemies, the French and their Indian allies. At the call of the Board of Trade, a conference of colonial leaders—with delegates on hand from Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, and the New England colonies—was meeting in Albany to negotiate a treaty with the Iroquois. The delegates stayed on to talk about forming a colonial federation

for defense. Benjamin Franklin proposed to his fellow delegates a plan by which Parliament would set up in America “one general government” for all the colonies, each of which would “retain its present constitution” except for the powers to be given the general government. The King would appoint a President-General, and the colonial assemblies would elect representatives to a Grand Council. The President-General in consultation with the Council would take charge of all relations with the Indians; the Council, subject to his veto, would make laws and levy taxes for raising troops, building forts, waging war, and carrying on other Indian affairs.

War with the French and Indians was already beginning when this Albany Plan was presented to the colonial assemblies for their consideration. Yet none of them approved it, and none except the Massachusetts assembly even gave it very serious attention. “Everyone cries, a union is necessary,” Franklin wrote to the Massachusetts governor, “but when they come to the manner and form of the union, their weak noodles are perfectly distracted.”

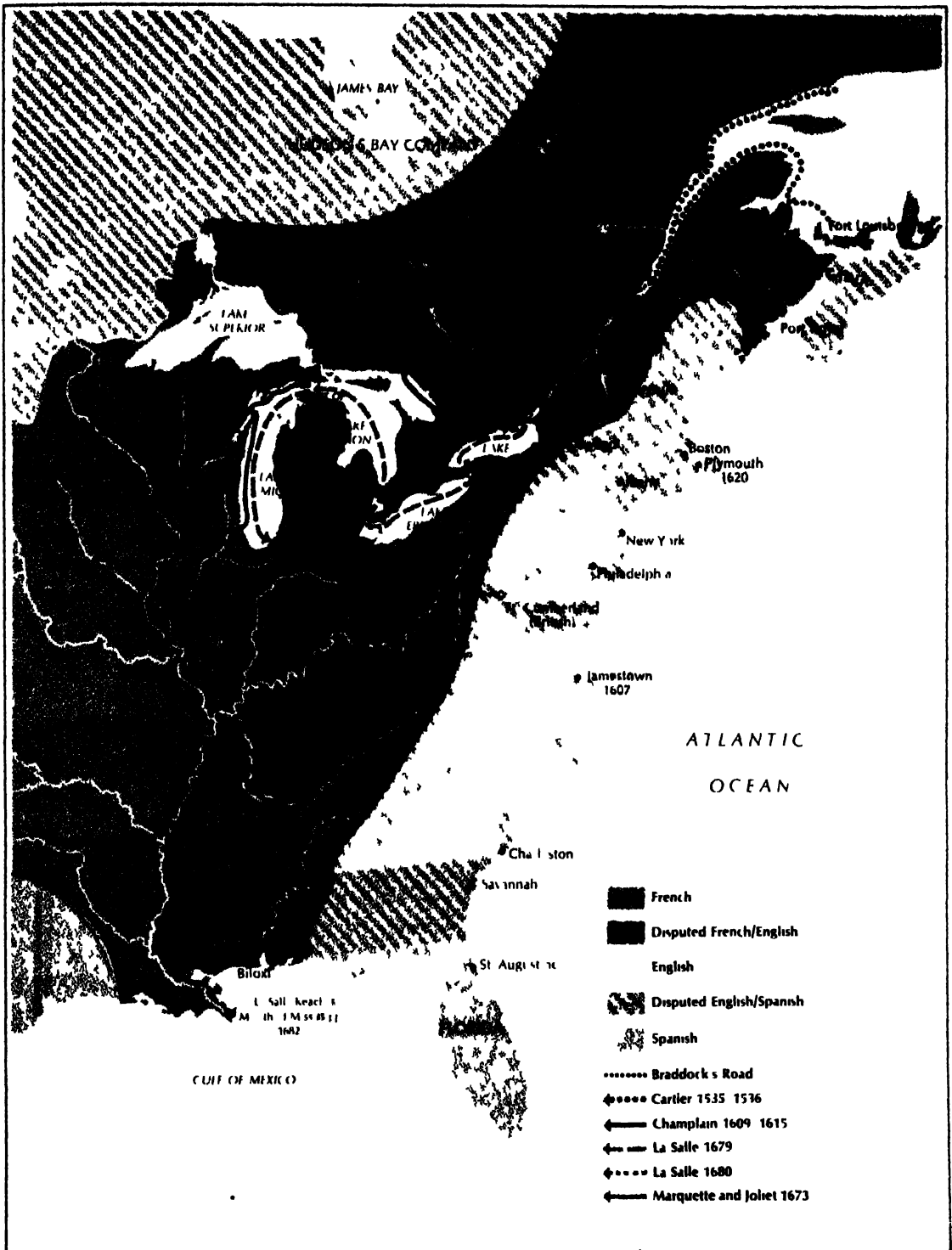
## Struggling for a Continent

Spacious though it was, the continent of North America seemed too small to contain both the English and the French. The English, as Protestants, and the French, as Roman Catholics, eyed each other with suspicion and fear. As fishermen and fur traders they competed for the profits of the forest and the sea. Each national group began ultimately to feel that its very survival in America depended upon the elimination of the other's influence.

### NEW FRANCE

The French greatly extended their sway in America after the Grand Monarch, Louis XIV, took the government into his own hands (1661) and, with a program of centralization at home and expansion abroad, proceeded to live up to his supposed remark, “I am the state.” His finance minister and economic planner, Jean Colbert, conceived of an integrated empire

consisting of four parts: France itself as the center and the source of capital and manufactured goods; her West Indian islands (especially Martinique and Guadeloupe) as suppliers of sugar and other exotic products; posts along the African coast as aids in carrying on the slave trade; and the settlements in Canada as a market for exports from France and a granary for provisioning the West Indies. The colonies were to be governed directly from Paris, pretty much as if they were local subdivisions of France itself. New France was to have a governor, an intendant, and a bishop, each to be appointed by the King and each to serve as a check upon the other two. In practice this arrangement led to jealousies and cross-purposes which often frustrated the colonial administration—except when some individual official in America had the character and will to assert his preeminence. Such a man was Jean Talon, the first of the intendants, and even more outstanding was Count Frontenac, the greatest of the governors (1672–1698).



Though Colbert intended to make Canada a compactly settled agricultural province, the aspirations of Talon and Frontenac for the glory of France caused them to expand New France beyond Colbert's limits; other forces also tended to disperse the colonial population. The lure of the forest and its furs drew immigrant peasants into the wilderness where they often married Indian squaws and adopted tribal ways. Another group, the Jesuits, were impelled onward by their missionary zeal in the search for savage souls to save. And the bottom lands of the Mississippi attracted farmers discouraged by the short growing season in Canada.

The nature of the Illinois country had been made known by adventuresome explorers. In 1673 Louis Joliet and Father Marquette journeyed together by canoe from Green Bay along the Fox, Wisconsin, and Mississippi rivers as far as the mouth of the Arkansas, then returned with assurance that the Mississippi empties into the Gulf of Mexico, not the Gulf of California as previously thought. The next year René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, a supremely romantic and at the same time a shrewdly practical man, began the explorations that finally, in 1682, took him to the delta of the Mississippi, where he took possession of the surrounding country for the King of France, naming it Louisiana in the King's honor. Subsequently traders and missionaries wandered to the southwest as far as the Rio Grande, and the explorer La Vérendrye (1743) pushed westward from Lake Superior to a point within sight of the Rocky Mountains. Eventually Frenchmen revealed the outlines of the whole continental interior and marked its boundaries with the cross and the fleur-de-lis.

To secure their hold upon the territory thus staked out, they founded a string of widely separated communities, strategically located fortresses, and far-flung missions and trading posts. On Cape Breton Island they established Fort Louisbourg, one of the most redoubtable strongholds in all the New World, to guard the approach to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. From both banks of the St. Lawrence River the strips of land ("seigneuries") of would-be feudal lords stretched to the edge of the clearings. On a high bluff above the river stood Quebec, the pride of the French empire in America. Farther up the river was Montreal, even more "provincial"

and less sophisticated than Quebec. Hundreds of miles to the west, near the juncture of Lake Superior with Lakes Michigan and Huron, was the tiny outpost of Sault Sainte Marie. Hundreds of miles to the southeast of this, at the juncture of Lakes Huron and Erie, was the well-fortified Detroit. Farther to the southwest, along the Mississippi between the Missouri and the Ohio, was a cluster of hamlets—Cahokia, Kaskaskia, Fort Chartres, Sainte Genevieve—each with its outlying common fields of black earth under cultivation. Over on the Wabash was the fifth tiny settlement of the Illinois country, Vincennes.

On the lower Mississippi were plantations much like those in the Southern colonies of English America, plantations worked by Negro slaves and supporting a race-conscious class of "Creoles," who had far more pretensions to grandeur than did the comparatively poor and necessarily democratic seigneurs of Canada. Louisiana became relatively populous, especially after thousands of settlers had been brought in by the land-speculation schemes of John Law, whose "Mississippi Bubble" burst in 1721, to the ruin of investors in Europe and the disillusionment of recently arrived Louisianans. Founded in 1718, New Orleans soon grew into a city comparable in size with some of those on the Atlantic seaboard but quaintly different, with its houses built of cypress logs and bark roofs and set upon stilts above the swampy ground. To the east of New Orleans, along the Gulf of Mexico, were the towns of Biloxi (founded 1699) and Mobile (1702), completing the string of mainland settlements which stretched all the way around from Fort Louisbourg.

## ANGLO-FRENCH CONFLICT

No serious trouble between English and French colonists occurred so long as their homelands remained at peace. Charles II and James II of England persisted in their friendship for Louis XIV of France, despite the fact that Louis, with his wars of French aggrandizement, ran directly counter to the traditional English policy of maintaining a balance of power on the European continent. In the Treaty of Whitehall (1686) James II and Louis XIV pledged themselves to refrain from hostilities in

## Advantages of the French Threat [1748–1749]

Peter Kalm, a university professor in Swedish Finland, toured some of the English colonies during 1748–1749. He reported

*I have been told by Englishmen . . . that the English colonies in North America, in the space of thirty or fifty years, would be able to form a state by themselves, entirely independent of Old England. But as the whole country which lies along the sea-shore is unguarded, and on the land side is harassed by the French, in times of war these dangerous neighbors are sufficient to prevent the connection of the colonies with their mother country from being quite broken off. The English government has therefore sufficient reason to consider the French in North America as the best means of keeping their colonies in due submission.*

America even if ("which God forbid") they should find themselves at war with one another in Europe. This was an early and interesting attempt to keep America out of Europe's wars, but in just a few years it was a dead letter.

When James II was deposed, he was replaced by Louis XIV's enemy, William III, who continued to be stadholder (chief magistrate) of the Netherlands as well as King of England, and who soon resumed his stubborn resistance to the European aggressions of the French. His successor, Queen Anne, with the aid of alliances he had formed before his death, carried on the struggle against France and her newly found ally, Spain.

These wars spread from Europe to America, where they were known to the English colonists as King William's War (1689–1697) and Queen Anne's War (1701–1713). The first, which involved few of the colonists except in northern New England, led to no decisive result. The second, which entailed border fighting with the Spaniards in the South as well as the French and their Indian allies in the North, ended in one of the great and far-reaching international settlements of modern history—the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). At Utrecht the English were awarded some sizable territorial gains in North America at the expense of the French: Acadia (Nova Scotia), Newfoundland, and the shores of Hudson Bay.

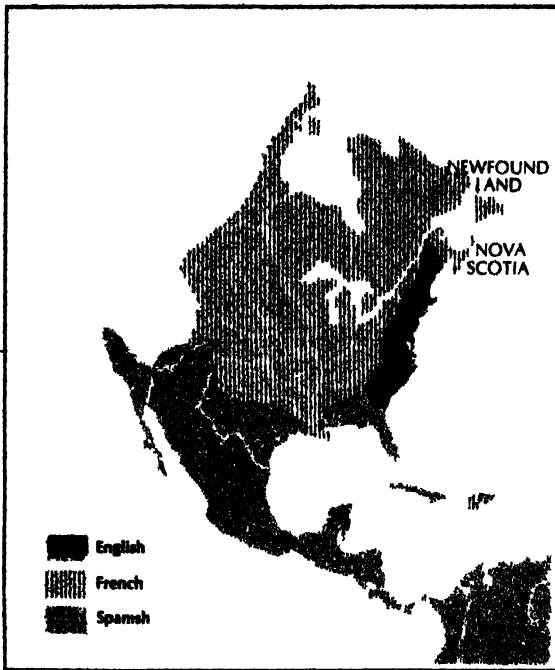
After about a quarter of a century of European and American peace, England went to war with Spain over the question of English trading rights in the Spanish colonies, and the English in Georgia came to blows with the

Spaniards in Florida. The Anglo-Spanish conflict soon merged in a general European war when Frederick the Great of Prussia seized some of the territory of Maria Theresa of Austria. Louis XV of France joined the Prussians against the Austrians in the hope of getting the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium), and George II of England came to the aid of Maria Theresa so as to keep the French out of the Low Countries. Again New England and New France were involved in the hostilities—in what the English colonists referred to as King George's War (1744–1748). New Englanders captured the French bastion at Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island, but to their bitter disappointment they had to abandon it in accordance with the peace treaty, which provided for the mutual restoration of conquered territory.

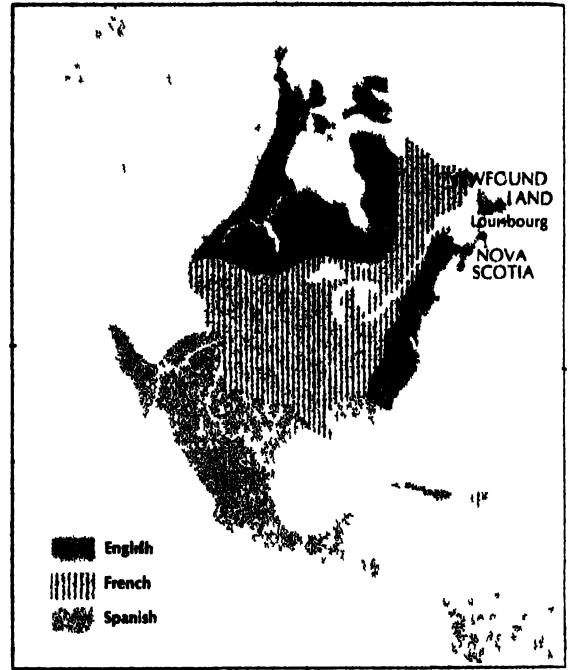
This war and the two preceding it had arisen primarily from European causes, and only a small fraction of the people in the English colonies had taken any part. To the colonists these were foreign wars—King William's, Queen Anne's, King George's—rather than their own. But the next conflict was different. Known to the colonists as the French and Indian War, it was in fact a "Great War for the Empire." Unlike the preliminaries, this climactic struggle originated in the interior of North America.

## THE GREAT WAR FOR THE EMPIRE

Within the American wilderness a number of border disputes arose, but the most serious of them concerned the ownership of the Ohio Val-



North America in 1700



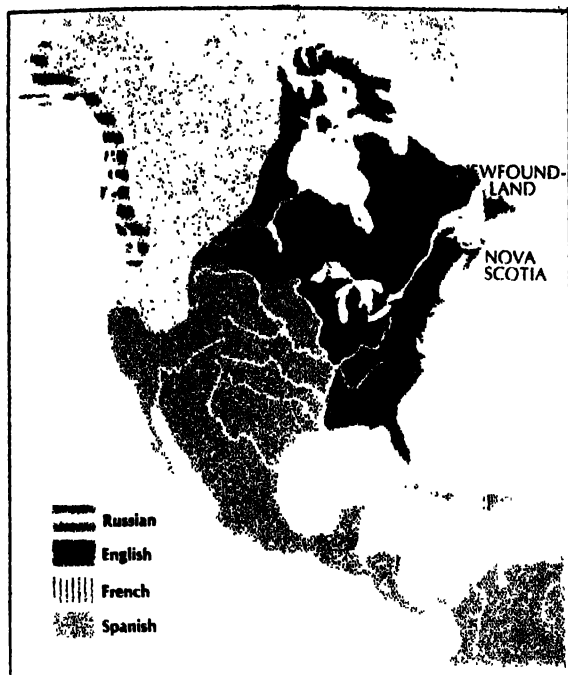
North America After 1713

ley The French, desiring to control this direct route between Canada and Louisiana, began to build a chain of fortifications to make good their claim. Pennsylvania fur traders and Virginia land speculators (the latter organized as the Ohio Company) looked to the country across the Alleghenies as a profitable field for their operations, and the British government, aroused to the defense of its territorial rights, gave instructions to the colonial governors to resist French encroachments. Acting on these instructions, the governor of Virginia sent George Washington, then only twenty-one, to protest to the commanders of the French forts newly built between Lake Erie and the Allegheny River, but these commanders politely replied that the land was French. While Washington was on his fruitless mission, a band of Virginians tried to forestall the French by erecting a fort of their own at the strategic key to the Ohio Valley—the forks of the Ohio, where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers join. A stronger band of Canadians drove the Virginians away, completed the work, and named it Fort Duquesne. Arriving with the advance

guard of a relief force from Virginia, Washington met a French detachment in a brief but bloody skirmish. He then fell back to a hastily constructed stockade, Fort Necessity, where he was overwhelmed by troops from Fort Duquesne and compelled to surrender (July 4, 1754). The first shots of the French and Indian War had been fired.

For the English colonists, the war had begun inauspiciously, and it continued to go badly for them during the next few years. They received aid from the home government, but this aid was inefficiently and unintelligently applied. The British fleet failed to prevent the landing of large French reinforcements in Canada, and the newly appointed commander in chief of the British army in America, General Edward Braddock, failed to retake the forks of the Ohio. Brave but aged, wise in the ways of European warfare but unused to the American woods, Braddock wore out his men by having them cut a long military road through the forest toward Fort Duquesne, and he exposed them to attack from the tree-hidden enemy by marching them in the accepted European for-





North America After 1763

mation. Seven miles from the fort he ran into a French and Indian ambush (July 9, 1755); he himself and large numbers of his men were killed, and the survivors fled all the way back to Fort Cumberland in Maryland. The frontier from Pennsylvania to Virginia was left exposed to Indian raids, and many frontier settlers withdrew to the east of the Allegheny Mountains.

After about two years of fighting in America, the governments of France and England finally declared hostilities, and a world war (known in Europe as the Seven Years' War, 1756-1763) began. France and England now changed partners, France allying herself with her former enemy, Austria, and England joining France's former ally, Prussia. Henceforth battles were fought not only on the American mainland but also in the West Indies, in Europe, and around the world in India.

In this global contest the British had the advantage of the mightiest navy on the seas and, with Frederick the Great on their side, the finest army in Europe. In America the people of the English colonies outnumbered those of the French colonies by approximately fifteen to

one, but were by no means that much stronger militarily. The French had numerous and powerful Indian allies, many of them newly attracted to the French by the latter's early victories in the war. The English had few such allies; the Iroquois, traditionally friendly to the English and hostile to the French, now remained firmly neutral. Furthermore, the French government kept its colonists in a fairly good state of military discipline and readiness, and could count upon the loyal services of a high proportion of its colonial manpower. The British government, on the other hand, exercised much less control over its thirteen colonies, which often acted as if they were autonomous. Only where and when they were exposed to immediate danger did the English colonists wholeheartedly support the war effort.

At first the overall direction of British strategy was weak. Then, in 1757, William Pitt, as prime minister, was allowed to act as practically a wartime dictator of the Empire. Pitt reformed the army and the navy, replacing bureaucratic deadwood with young and eager officers. He gave generous subsidies to Frederick the Great, who thus was enabled to keep the French fairly busy in Europe. And he turned from the defensive to the offensive in America, with a determination to drive the French out of the continent.

With Pitt as organizer, the British regulars in America, together with colonial troops, proceeded to take one French stronghold after another, including Fort Duquesne in 1758. The next year, after a siege of Quebec, supposedly impregnable atop its towering cliff, the army of General James Wolfe struggled up a hidden ravine, surprised the larger forces of the Marquis de Montcalm, and defeated them in a battle in which both commanders were slain. The fall of Quebec marked the climax of the American phase of the war, and the decisive battle was afterward remembered as a romantic and tragic encounter between two high-minded, able men.

Some other phases of the war were less romantic, less high-minded. In the course of it the British resorted to such expedients as population dispersal. Fearing trouble from the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia, the British uprooted several thousand of them and scattered them throughout the English colonies; some of these Acadians eventually made their



#### The Taking of Quebec

*In 1759 the capture of Quebec was the main objective of the British campaign in America. General James Wolfe, only thirty-two, commanded an army that proceeded up the St. Lawrence River on navy transports. General Jeffrey Amherst, commander in chief of the British armies in America, was to take forts Crown Point and Ticonderoga, then join Wolfe before Quebec. Amherst was delayed, and Wolfe decided to go ahead alone, though his army was smaller than that of the French at Quebec under the Marquis de Montcalm. The Quebec defenses were too strong for a direct attack from the river. After a few months' siege, Wolfe daringly landed his troops above the town, led them up an insufficiently guarded ravine, and reached the heights known as the Plains of Abraham. Now the cautious Montcalm had no choice but to fight. He attacked without waiting to assemble all his available forces, and in about fifteen minutes he was compelled to retreat. The contemporary English engraving portrays in the one scene a whole succession of events—the landings, the climb up the ravine, and the battle itself. (Library of Congress)*

way to Louisiana, where they became the ancestors of the present-day Cajuns. Meanwhile the French and their savage allies were committing worse atrocities, and hundreds of defenseless families along the English frontier fell before the hatchet and the scalping knife.

Peace finally came after the accession of the peace-minded George III and the resignation of Pitt, who disagreed with the new King and wished to continue hostilities. Yet Pitt's aims

were pretty well realized in the treaty signed at Paris in 1763. By its terms the French ceded to Great Britain some of their West Indian islands and all their colonies in India except two. The French also transferred Canada and all other French territory east of the Mississippi, except the island of New Orleans, to Great Britain, and New Orleans and the French claims west of the Mississippi to Spain. Thus the French gave up all title to the mainland of North America.

## The New Imperialism

As the war ended, the London policy makers faced a dilemma, though they were not fully aware of it. On the one hand, they could revert to the old colonial system with its half-hearted enforcement of the mercantilist program, but that would mean virtual independence for the colonies. On the other hand, the men in London could renew their efforts to reform the Empire and enforce the laws, but that would lead to revolt and absolute independence. The problem was further complicated by both the costs and the rewards of the war—the debts and the territory that it brought.

### BURDENS OF EMPIRE

So strong had grown the colonial feeling against direct legislation by Parliament that, during the French and Indian War, the English government did not attempt to tax or draft the colonists directly but called upon the assemblies to provide quotas of soldiers and supplies. This requisition system, itself a concession to provincial prejudice, heightened the self-importance of the assemblies, and most of them further asserted their autonomy by complying in a slow and niggardly way. Some of them, unwilling to be taxed by Parliament, also refused to tax themselves; they issued paper money instead.

In Virginia the legislature not only issued paper money but, when the price of tobacco rose, also passed a law to deprive the Anglican clergy (who were paid in tobacco) of the benefits of the price rise. When this law was disallowed (1759), one of the ministers sued his vestrymen for his full pay. At the trial of the "parson's cause" the young lawyer Patrick Henry, defending the vestrymen, denounced the Privy Council for its tyranny and told his fellow Virginians to ignore its action. Roused by Henry's oratory, the jurors awarded the parson damages of only one penny. Thus did they defy the authority of the British government.

In Massachusetts the merchants disregarded the laws of the Empire even more flagrantly than did the planters in Virginia. Throughout the war these merchants persisted in trading with the enemy in Canada and in the French

West Indies. British officials resorted to general search warrants—"writs of assistance"—for discovering smuggled goods and stamping out the illegal and unpatriotic trade. As attorney for the Massachusetts merchants, James Otis maintained that these searches violated the ancient rights of Englishmen and that the law of Parliament authorizing the warrants was therefore null and void. With eloquence as stirring as Henry's, Otis insisted that Parliament had only a limited power of legislating for the colonies.

The thirteen continental colonies were only a part of the British possessions scattered throughout the Americas and the world, and before 1763 they were not considered (except in their own eyes) as the most valuable part. Some of them, such as Virginia and Maryland with their tobacco production, fitted in fairly well with the aims of mercantilism; but on the whole the island colonies contributed a great deal more than those of the mainland to the profits of English merchants and the prosperity of the English homeland. The "sugar islands" in particular—Barbados and the Windward Islands, the Leeward Islands, Jamaica—yielded remarkable opportunities for the investment of English capital. They also complemented the economies of some of the mainland colonies by providing a market for the output of fisheries, farms, and forest industries.

Believing in a kind of commercial imperialism, most English merchants opposed the acquisition of territory for its own sake. But some Englishmen and Americans began to believe that land itself should be acquired for the Empire because of the population the land would support, the taxes it would produce, and the sense of imperial greatness it would confer. Both William Pitt and Benjamin Franklin were among the advocates of this new territorial imperialism. Franklin wrote powerfully upon the future greatness of the British Empire in America, stressing the need for vast spaces to accommodate the rapid and limitless growth of the American people. Old-fashioned mercantilists, however, continued to think of trade as the essence of empire, and of island and coastal possessions as bases for trade. The issue came to a head with the peacemaking at the end of

the French and Indian War. Commercial imperialists urged that Canada be returned to France in exchange for the most valuable of her sugar islands, Guadeloupe. Territorial imperialists, Franklin among them, argued in favor of keeping Canada. The decision to retain Canada marked a change in the emphasis of imperial policy.

With the acquisition of Canada and the other fruits of war in 1763, the area of the British Empire was more than doubled and the problems of governing it were made many times more complex. The war had left the British government with a staggering burden of debt, and English landlords and merchants objected violently to increased taxes. The rather half-hearted war effort of the colonists had shown the cumulative evils of salutary neglect. And, by giving Great Britain undisputed title to the transmontane West as well as Canada, the peace had brought new problems of administration and defense. British statesmen feared that France, by no means crushed, might soon launch an attack somewhere in America for the recovery of her lost territories and prestige.

### POLICIES OF GEORGE III

Responsibility for the solution of these postwar problems fell to the young monarch George III, who had come to the throne in 1760. Unlike the first two Georges, who had remained essentially German in point of view, George III was thoroughly British and proud of it. He was determined to follow the advice of his mother to be King in fact as well as name. Shrewdly, he took care not to upset the recently developed constitutional practice according to which the party controlling Parliament made and unmade ministries. Instead, becoming a politician himself, the King created a party of his own through patronage and bribes and thus took control of Parliament away from the Whigs. Though not at all the ogre he was once pictured in American schoolbooks, George III achieved his aim of personal government and therefore deserves much of the credit or blame for the acts that followed.

More immediately responsible was George Grenville, whom the King made prime minister in 1763. Grenville, a brother-in-law of William Pitt, did not share Pitt's sympathy with the co-

lonial point of view. He agreed with the prevailing British opinion that the colonists should be compelled to obey the laws and to pay a part of the cost of defending and administering the Empire. He fancied himself something of an efficiency expert, and he was indeed an able administrator. Furthermore, as chancellor of the exchequer and first lord of the treasury, he was well acquainted with matters of public finance. Promptly he undertook to impose system upon what had been a rather unsystematic aggregation of colonial possessions in America.

The Western problem was the most urgent. With the repulse of the French, frontiersmen from the English colonies had begun promptly to move over the mountains and into the upper Ohio Valley. Objecting to this intrusion, an alliance of Indian tribes, under the remarkable Ottawa chieftain Pontiac, raised the war cry. As an emergency measure the British government issued a proclamation forbidding settlers to advance beyond a line drawn along the mountain divide between the Atlantic and the interior.

Though the emergency passed, the principle of the Proclamation Line of 1763 remained—the principle of controlling the westward movement of population. This was something new. Earlier the government had encouraged the rapid peopling of the frontier for reasons of both defense and trade. In time the official attitude had begun to change, because of a fear that the interior might draw away so many people as to weaken markets and investments nearer the coast, and because of a desire to reserve land-speculating and fur-trading opportunities for English rather than colonial enterprisers. Then, having tentatively announced a new policy in 1763, the government soon extended and elaborated it. A definite Indian boundary was to be located, and from time to time relocated, in agreement with the various tribes. Western lands were to be opened for occupation gradually, and settlement was to be carefully supervised to see that it proceeded in a compact and orderly way.

To provide further for the defense of the colonies, and to raise revenue and enforce imperial law within them, the Grenville ministry with the cooperation of Parliament meanwhile instituted a series of measures, some of which were familiar in principle and others fairly novel. Regular troops were now to be stationed

permanently in the provinces, and by the Mutiny Act (1765) the colonists were called upon to assist in provisioning and maintaining the army. Ships of the navy were assigned to patrol American waters and look out for smugglers. The customs service was reorganized and enlarged, and vice-admiralty courts were set up in America to try accused smugglers without the benefit of sympathetic local juries. Royal officials were ordered to take up their colonial posts in person instead of sending substitutes. The Sugar Act (1764), designed in part to eliminate the illegal trade between the continental colonies and the foreign West Indies, lowered the high molasses duty of the Molasses Act of 1733, but imposed new duties on a number of items and made provision for more effective collection. The Currency Act (1764) forbade the colonial assemblies to issue any more paper money and required them to retire on schedule all the paper money issued during the war. And, most momentous of all, the Stamp Act (1765) imposed a tax to be paid on every legal document in the colonies, every newspaper, almanac, or pamphlet, and every deck of cards or pair of dice.

Thus the new imperial program with its reapplication of old mercantilist principles began to be put into effect. In a sense it proved highly effective. British officials soon were collecting more than ten times as much annual revenue in America as before 1763. But the new policy was not a lasting success.

### COLONIAL SELF-INTEREST

The colonists still had much to gain by remaining within the Empire and enjoying its many benefits. They still held grievances against one another as well as against the authorities in London. In 1763, for example, a band of Pennsylvania frontiersmen known as the Paxton Boys descended on Philadelphia to demand defense money and changes in the tax laws, and bloodshed was averted only by concessions from the colonial government.

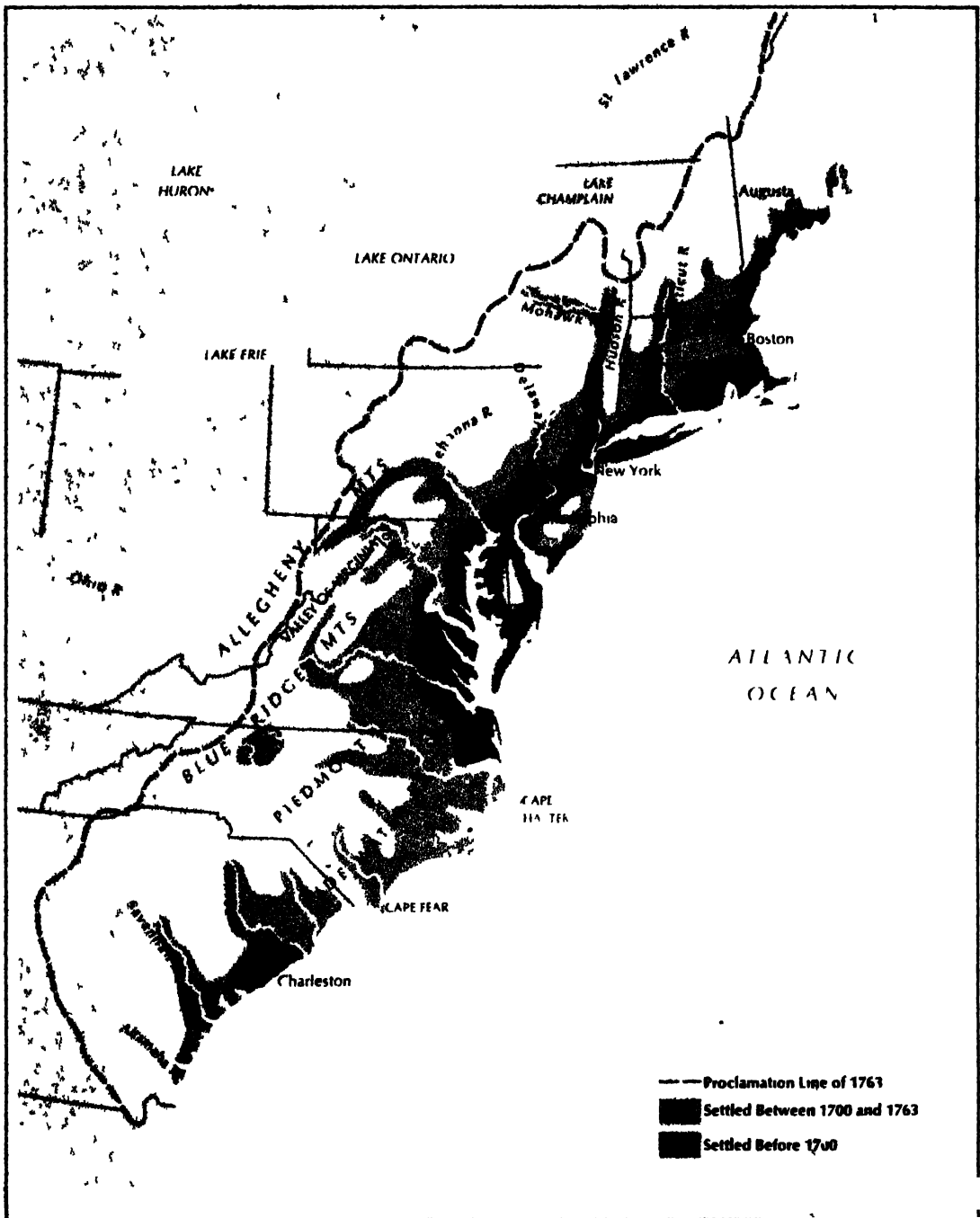
In 1771 a small-scale civil war broke out as a consequence of the Regulator movement in North Carolina. The Regulators were farmers of the Carolina upcountry who organized to oppose the extortionate taxes that the sheriffs

collected. These sheriffs, along with other local officials, were appointed by the governor. At first the Regulators tried to redress their grievances peaceably, by electing their leaders to the colonial assembly. The western counties were badly underrepresented in the assembly, and the Regulators were unable to get control of it. They finally armed themselves and undertook to resist tax collections by force. To suppress the revolt, Governor William Tryon raised an army of militiamen, mostly from the eastern counties. The militiamen met and defeated the Regulators, some 2,000 strong, in the Battle of Alamance, in which nine on each side were killed and many others wounded. Afterward, six Regulators were hanged for treason.

Though such bloodshed was exceptional, the people of the colonies were divided by numerous conflicts of interest. After 1763, however, the policies of the British government increasingly offset the divisive tendencies within the colonies and caused Americans to look at the disadvantages of empire more closely than at its benefits. These policies threatened, in some degree or other, the well-being of nearly all classes in America.

Northern merchants would suffer from the various restraints upon their commerce, from the closing of the West to their ventures in land speculation and fur trading, from the denial of opportunities in manufacturing, and from the increased load of taxation. Southern planters, already burdened with debts to English merchants, would not only have to pay additional taxes but would also be deprived of the chance to lessen their debts by selling Western land, in which George Washington and others were much interested. Professional men—preachers, lawyers, and professors—considered the interests of merchants and planters to be identical with their own. Small farmers, clearly the largest group in the colonies, stood to lose as a result of reduced markets and hence lower prices for their crops, together with an increase in their taxes and other costs, not to mention the difficulty of getting paper-money loans. Town workers faced the prospect of narrowing opportunities, particularly because of the restraints on manufacturing and paper money.

At the end of the French and Indian War, the colonists already were beginning to feel the pinch of a postwar depression. Previously the British government, pouring money into their



### England Mainland Colonies

midst to finance the fighting, had stimulated a wartime boom. Now the government was going to take money out of the colonies instead of putting it in. If the government's measures should be strictly enforced, the immediate effect

would be to aggravate the hard times. The long-term effect would be to confine the enterprising spirit of the colonists and condemn them to a fixed or even a declining level of living.

Grievous as were the economic conse-

quences of George III's program, its political consequences would be as bad or worse. While colonial democracy was far from all-inclusive, the colonists were used to a remarkably wide latitude in self-government. Nowhere else in the world at that time did so large a proportion of the people take an active interest in public affairs. The chief centers of American political activity were the provincial assemblies, and here the people (through their elected representatives) were able to assert themselves because the assemblies had established the right to give or withhold appropriations for the costs of government within the colonies. If, now, the British authorities should succeed in raising extensive revenues directly from America, the

colonial voters and their representatives would lose control over public finance, and without such control their participation in politics would be very nearly meaningless.

Home rule was not something new and different that these Americans were striving to get. It was something old and familiar that they desired to keep. They would lose it if the London authorities were allowed to carry out the program of raising revenues from colonial taxation and providing unconditional salaries for royal officials. The discontented Americans eventually prepared themselves to lay down their lives for a movement that was both democratic and conservative—a movement to conserve the liberties they already possessed.

## Stirrings of Revolt

The experience of the French and Indian War, while convincing prominent Englishmen of the need for tighter imperial control, had exerted an opposite effect on the attitude of colonials. Rightly or wrongly, they had gained a heightened sense of self-confidence in their own military prowess, along with a certain contempt for British regulars and especially their officers, such as the unfortunate General Braddock. The French threat having been removed from the frontier forest, many of the colonists felt a new surge of expansive energy and daring. In short, they concluded that they needed not more but rather less of imperial guidance and protection than they had previously received.

Through its very different influences on the thinking of English and colonial leaders, the grand victory of the Empire led to a period of unprecedented tension between the mother country and the colonies.

### THE STAMP ACT CRISIS

If Prime Minister Grenville had wished deliberately to antagonize and unify some of the most influential groups in the colonies (which, of course, he did not) he could have chosen no means more effective than the Stamp Act. The tax fell upon all Americans, of whatever section, colony, or class. In particular, the stamps

required for ship's papers and legal documents offended merchants and lawyers. Tavern owners, often the political oracles of their neighborhoods, now were supposed to buy stamps for their licenses, and printers, for their newspapers and other publications. Thus the tax antagonized those who could play most effectively upon public opinion.

Nevertheless it occurred to few colonists that they could do more than grumble and buy the stamps until the Virginia House of Burgesses sounded a "trumpet of sedition" that aroused Americans to action almost everywhere. In the House of Burgesses a group of young aristocrats aspired to exert themselves against the oligarchy of tidewater planters who, with the royal governor, dominated Virginia politics. Foremost among these young malcontents was Patrick Henry, who was ambitious to enlarge the fame he had gained in the "parson's cause." Henry made a fiery speech in the House (May 1765), concluding with a hint that George III like earlier tyrants might lose his head. There were shocked cries of "Treason!" and, according to a man who was present, Henry apologized, though many years afterward he was quoted as having made the defiant reply "If this be treason, make the most of it." In any case, he proceeded to introduce a set of resolutions declaring that Americans possessed all the rights of Englishmen,

**The Stamp Act  
Congress:  
Resolutions  
[1765]**

*I. That His Majesty's subjects in these colonies owe the same allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain that is owing from his subjects born within the realm, and all due subordination to that august body the Parliament of Great Britain.*

*II. That His Majesty's liege subjects in these colonies are intitled to all the inherent rights and liberties of his natural born subjects within the kingdom of Great Britain.*

*III. That it is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen, that no taxes be imposed on them but with their own consent, given personally or by their representatives.*

*IV. That the people of these colonies are not, and from their local circumstances cannot be, represented in the House of Commons in Great Britain.*

*V. That the only representatives of the people of these colonies are persons chosen therein by themselves, and that no taxes ever have been, or can be constitutionally imposed on them, but by their respective legislatures. . . .*

especially the right to be taxed only by their own representatives; moreover, that Virginians should pay no taxes except those voted by the Virginia assembly, and that anyone advocating the right of Parliament to tax Virginians should be deemed an enemy of the colony. The House of Burgesses did not adopt the most extreme of Henry's resolutions, but all of them were printed and circulated as the "Virginia Resolves," thus giving the impression in other colonies that the people of Virginia were both more daring and better unified than was the fact.

Stirred by the Virginia Resolves, mobs in various places began to take the law into their own hands, and during the summer of 1765 riots broke out in various places, the worst of them in Boston. Men belonging to the newly organized "Sons of Liberty" went about terrorizing stamp agents and burning the stamps. The agents, themselves Americans, hastily resigned, and very few stamps were sold in the continental colonies. In Boston the mob got out of hand and went about harrying pro-British "aristocrats" such as the lieutenant governor, Thomas Hutchinson, whose house was wrecked (though privately he had opposed the passage of the Stamp Act).

At about the time that Patrick Henry presented his resolutions to the Virginia assembly, James Otis proposed to his fellow legislators in Massachusetts that they call an intercolonial

congress for concerted action against the new tax. In October 1765 the Stamp Act Congress met in New York, with delegates from nine of the colonies present. The delegates decided to petition both the King and the two houses of Parliament. Though admitting that Americans owed to Parliament "all due subordination," the congress denied that they could rightfully be taxed except by their provincial assemblies.

If the British government had tried to enforce the Stamp Act, possibly the Revolutionary War would have begun ten years earlier than it actually did. The government was not deterred by resolves, riots, and petitions, but the Americans also used something more persuasive than any of these—economic pressure. Already, in response to the Sugar Act of 1764, many New Englanders had quit buying English goods. Now the colonial boycott spread, and the Sons of Liberty intimidated those colonists who were reluctant to participate in it. The merchants of England, feeling the loss of much of their colonial market, begged Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act, while stories of unemployment, poverty, and discontent arose from English seaports and manufacturing towns.

Having succeeded Grenville as prime minister, the Marquis of Rockingham used his influence in favor of appeasing both the English merchants and the American colonists, and King George III himself finally was convinced that the act must be repealed. Opponents of



## **The Declaratory Act [1766]**

While repealing the Stamp Act, Parliament denied the arguments put forth by Americans at the meeting of the Stamp Act Congress and on other occasions. The constitutional issue was sharply drawn, as may be seen by comparing the resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress with these words of Parliament's "declaratory" act

*Whereas several of the houses of representatives in his Majesty's colonies and plantations in America have of late, against law, claimed to themselves, or to the general assemblies of the same, the sole and exclusive right of imposing duties or taxes upon his Majesty's subjects in the said colonies and plantations; and have, in pursuance of such claim, passed certain votes, resolutions, and orders, derogatory to the legislative authority of parliament, and inconsistent with the dependency of said colonies and plantations upon the crown of Great Britain: . . . be it declared . . . That the said colonies and plantations in America have been, are, and of right ought to be subordinate unto and dependent upon the imperial crown and parliament of Great Britain, and that the King's majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled, had, hath, and of right ought to have full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects of the crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever.*

repeal, and they were strong and vociferous, insisted that unless the colonists were compelled to obey the Stamp Act, they would soon cease to obey any laws of Parliament. So Parliament passed the Declaratory Act, asserting parliamentary authority over the colonies in "all cases whatsoever," and then repealed the Stamp Act (1766). In their rejoicing over the repeal, most Americans paid little attention to the sweeping declaration of Parliament's power.

### **THE TOWNSHEND PROGRAM**

The appeasement policy of the Rockingham government was not so well received in England as in America. English landlords protested that the government had "sacrificed the landed gentlemen to the interests of traders and colonists." Soon the King dismissed the unpopular Rockingham and called upon William Pitt to form a new ministry. A critic of the Stamp Act, Pitt had a reputation in America as the colonists' friend, though his reputation suffered somewhat when he accepted a peerage as Lord Chatham. He continued as prime minister after gout and mental illness had laid him low, and the actual leadership of his administration

fell to the chancellor of the exchequer, Charles Townshend, "Champagne Charlie," a brilliant man but a sort of playboy of British politics.

Townshend had to deal with imperial problems and colonial grievances still left over from the Grenville ministry. Now that the Stamp Act was gone, the worst of these grievances was the Mutiny Act of 1765, which required the colonists to provide quarters and supplies for the British troops in America. The Massachusetts assembly, refusing to vote the supplies, was the first to defy the Mutiny Act, but the New York assembly, when it did the same thing, presented a more serious challenge to imperial authorities, since the army headquarters were in New York.

To enforce the Mutiny Act and raise a revenue in the colonies, Townshend proposed two measures to Parliament. First, New York was to be punished by the suspension of its assembly until the law was obeyed there. By thus singling out New York, Townshend thought he would avoid Grenville's mistake of arousing all the colonies at once. Second, duties were to be laid upon colonial imports of glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea. Townshend reasoned that the colonists could not logically object to taxation of this kind. For Benjamin

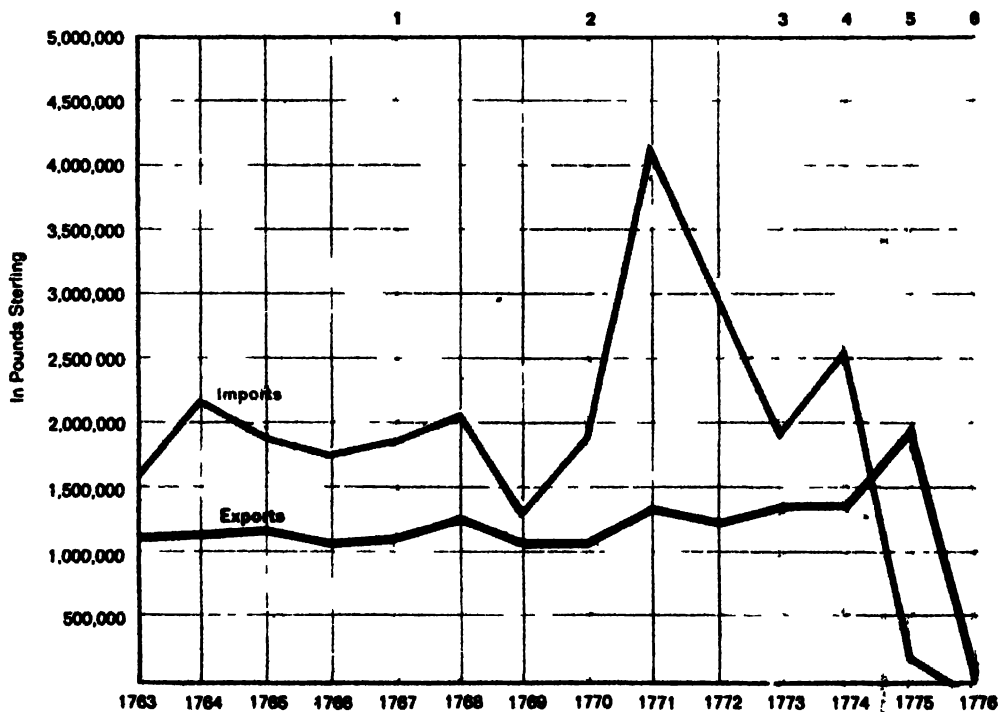
Franklin, as a colonial agent in London trying to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act, had drawn a distinction between "internal" and "external" taxes and had denounced the stamp duties as internal taxation. While Townshend laughed at this distinction he was now recom-

mending duties that, without question, were to be collected externally. In 1767 Parliament approved the Townshend duties and suspended the New York assembly.

To the colonists, however, the Townshend duties were scarcely more acceptable than the

*Though the Stamp Act (1765) apparently had little effect on imports from England, the Townshend Act (1767) led to a considerable reduction in them in 1769. After this law's almost complete repeal (1770), imports rose dramatically in 1771. The Tea Act (1773) and the nonimportation agreement (1774) helped to bring on another decline, and the subsequent outbreak of hostilities resulted in an almost complete stoppage of trade.*

Exports To and Imports From England by American Colonies 1763-1776



- 1 Townshend Act Passed, Levying Duties on Certain Imports
- 2 Townshend Act Repealed, Except for Tax on Tea
- 3 Tea Act Passed
- 4 Continental Congress Adopts Nonimportation Agreement
- 5 Battles of Lexington and Concord
- 6 Declaration of Independence

stamp tax, and the suspension of the one assembly threatened the annihilation of all. Taking up New York's cause as well as its own, the Massachusetts assembly sent out a circular letter urging all the rest to stand up against every tax, external or internal, imposed by Parliament. At first the Massachusetts circular evoked little response in some of the legislatures and ran into strong opposition in at least one of them, that of Pennsylvania. Then Lord Hillsborough, in the new office of Secretary of State for the Colonies, issued a circular letter of his own in which he warned that assemblies endorsing the Massachusetts letter would be dissolved. Promptly the other colonies, even Pennsylvania, rallied to the support of Massachusetts.

Besides inducing Parliament to levy import duties and suspend the New York assembly, Townshend also took steps to enforce commercial regulations in the colonies more effectively than ever. The most fateful of these steps was the establishment of a board of customs commissioners in America. In doing so, he intended to stop the leaks in the colonial custom houses. His commissioners, with headquarters in Boston, virtually ended the smuggling at that place, though smugglers continued to carry on a busy trade in other colonial seaports.

Naturally the Boston merchants were the most indignant, and they took the lead in organizing another boycott. In 1768 the merchants of Philadelphia and New York joined those of Boston in a nonimportation agreement, and later some of the Southern merchants and planters also agreed to cooperate. Throughout the colonies, crude American homespun became suddenly fashionable, while English luxuries were frowned upon. Some enthusiasts, advocating the development of colonial manufactures of all kinds, looked forward to the creation of a self-sufficient America, with an economy independent of the Empire's.

Before the consequences of his program were fully apparent, Townshend died, leaving the question of revising his import duties to his successor, Lord North. Hoping to break the nonimportation agreement and divide the colonists, Lord North secured the repeal (1770) of all the Townshend duties except the tea tax.

Meanwhile the presence of the customs commissioners in Boston led to violence. The

Boston mob had the most aggressive leader of all, Samuel Adams. The impoverished son of a once wealthy brewer, Adams had taken to politics after he himself had failed in business. As a rabble-rouser he had no equal in the colonies, and from the time of the Stamp Act troubles he was the guiding spirit of Massachusetts radicalism, even outdoing James Otis. Adams' success as a politician depended upon his finding suitable topics for agitation, and the British government, having repeatedly supplied him with topics, obliged him again by locating the customs commissioners in Boston and then stationing troops there.

To the Boston "liberty boys," the presence of the customs commissioners was a standing invitation to violence, and before long the terrified officials were driven to take refuge in Castle William, out in the harbor. So that they could return safely to their duties, the British government placed four regiments (afterward reduced to two) within the city. The presence of the redcoats antagonized Samuel Adams and his followers more than ever. While his men ragged the soldiers and engaged them in brawls, Adams filled the newspapers with imaginary stories of rapes and other atrocities committed by the troops, and he spread throughout Boston a rumor that the soldiers were preparing for a concerted attack upon the citizens. On the night of March 5, 1770, a mob of dockworkers and other "liberty boys" fell upon the sentry at the custom house. Hastily Captain Preston lined up several of his men in front of the building to protect it. There was some scuffling, and one of the soldiers was knocked down. Other soldiers then fired into the crowd, killing five of its members.

These events quickly became known as the "Boston Massacre" through the efforts of Samuel Adams and his adherents, who published an account bearing the title *Innocent Blood Crying to God from the Streets of Boston* and giving the impression that the dead were victims of a deliberate plot. The soldiers, tried before a jury of Bostonians and defended by Samuel Adams' cousin John Adams, were found guilty of no more than manslaughter and were given only a token punishment. Nevertheless, through newspapers and pamphlets, Samuel Adams convicted the redcoats of murder in the minds of many contemporary Americans, and year after year on March 5 he revived

the people's memory with orations recalling the events of 1770. Later generations accepted his version of the "massacre" and thus,

without knowing it, honored his skill as the foremost propagandist of the pre-Revolutionary decade.

### The "Bloody Massacre"

This broadside, "Engrav'd Printed & Sold by Paul Revere, Boston," pictures the Patriot version of the Boston incident of March 5, 1770. At the extreme right, Captain Thomas Preston, in command of the Custom House guards, leans as he orders his grinning men to fire on the unarmed citizens. The Custom House, Preston's headquarters, is sarcastically labeled "Butcher's Hall." Accompanying the picture were the names of the dead and eighteen lines of verse. One of the dead was Crispus Attucks, a tall, brawny, forty-seven-year-old man, reputed to be a Negro with some Indian blood who had escaped from slavery and taken up the life of a sailor. When, in 1888, a monument was erected to the fallen, a poem was recited honoring Attucks as "leader and roice that day: /The first to defy and the first to die. . . ." (Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 1910)



Engraved by W. L. G. Printed & Sold by Paul Revere, Boston.

THE BLOODY MASSACRE

March 5, 1770.

At the extreme right, Captain Thomas Preston, in command of the Custom House guards, leans as he orders his grinning men to fire on the unarmed citizens. The Custom House, Preston's headquarters, is sarcastically labeled "Butcher's Hall." Accompanying the picture were the names of the dead and eighteen lines of verse. One of the dead was Crispus Attucks, a tall, brawny, forty-seven-year-old man, reputed to be a Negro with some Indian blood who had escaped from slavery and taken up the life of a sailor. When, in 1888, a monument was erected to the fallen, a poem was recited honoring Attucks as "leader and roice that day: /The first to defy and the first to die. . . ." (Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. Russell Sage, 1910)

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLT

Though America quieted down for a while after 1770, Americans did not abandon their principles, and these principles were revolutionary, at least in implication. "The Revolution was effected before the war commenced," one of the greatest of the Revolutionary leaders, John Adams, afterward remarked. "The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people." Of course, very few of the people thought of outright independence till after the war had begun, and even those few (among them Samuel Adams) considered it best not to admit that independence was their ultimate aim. For the time being, most politically conscious Americans desired no more, and no less, than autonomy within the Empire. They argued that the English Constitution, correctly interpreted, supported their claims to individual liberty and colonial self-rule, and that the laws of nature and of God justified them in resisting infringements upon their rights.

In the course of the argument the Americans came to the conclusion that they were better Englishmen than the English themselves, better acquainted with the Constitution and more devoted to the liberties it guaranteed. Some of the Whig politicians in England, such as William Pitt and above all Edmund Burke, who spoke eloquently in favor of conciliation, were more or less inclined to agree. But other Englishmen, like the famous lexicographer and literary critic Samuel Johnson, looked upon the Americans as a deluded and indeed a barbarized offshoot of the English people. The majority in England were outraged rather than convinced by all the speechmaking and pamphleteering on the other side of the Atlantic.

To Englishmen the Constitution, though worthy of the highest respect, was an assortment of laws and usages that had developed through many centuries and that were rather elastic and vague. To Americans, on the other hand, it was a fixed and definite body of principles, which ought to be written down so as to avoid disagreements. Americans believed the colonies did have written constitutions—the colonial charters, which supposedly guaranteed to Americans all the traditional rights of Englishmen.

Of these rights the most fundamental, according to the colonists, was the right to be

taxed only with their own consent. When Townshend levied his "external" duties, the Philadelphia lawyer John Dickinson maintained in the *Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer* that even external taxation was legal only when designed to regulate trade and not to raise a revenue. But Americans did not like trade regulations, either, when the regulations began to be enforced. Eventually the discontented colonists took an unqualified stand upon the slogan "No taxation without representation."

This clamor about "representation" made little sense to Englishmen. Only about one in twenty-five of them was entitled to vote for members of Parliament, and some populous boroughs in England had no representatives at all. According to the prevailing English theory, however, Parliament did not represent individuals or geographical areas. Instead, it represented the interests of the whole nation and indeed the whole Empire, no matter where the members happened to come from. The unfranchised boroughs of England, the whole of Ireland, and the colonies 3,000 miles away—all were represented in the Parliament at London.

That was the theory of "virtual" representation, but Americans believed in actual representation. They felt they could be represented in Parliament only if they sent their quota of members to it. Some of them, even James Otis, considered proposals for electing American representatives, but most of the colonists realized that if they should participate in the action of Parliament they would be bound by that action, even though they were outnumbered and outvoted. So they reverted to the argument that they could be fairly represented only in their own colonial assemblies.

According to the American view of the Empire, and according to actual fact, these assemblies were little parliaments, as competent to legislate for their respective colonies as Parliament was for England. The Empire was a sort of federation of commonwealths, each with its own legislative body, all tied together by common loyalty to the King (much as in the British Commonwealth of Nations today). This being their conception of the Empire, the Americans protested bitterly against the pretensions of Parliament but had nothing except kind words for George III—until they decided to cut their imperial ties completely and declare for independence. According to the English view,

the Empire was a single, undivided unit, and everywhere within it the King and Parliament together were supreme.

The American doctrine of resistance to unconstitutional and tyrannical laws was based chiefly upon the Bible and the writings of John Locke. For generations the preachers of New England had taught that no man need obey a government when it violated the will of God as set forth in the Scriptures. Now, to show that rebellion against tyranny was lawful in God's sight, they retold such Bible stories as the one about a King of Israel who burdened his people with unjust taxes and was overthrown.

John Locke (1632-1704) would probably have been shocked if he had lived to see the use that Americans made of his doctrines. In his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) Locke attempted to justify the English revolution of 1688-1689 by which Parliament had won supremacy over the King. According to Locke's theory, men originally lived in a state of nature and enjoyed complete liberty, then agreed to a "compact" by which they set up a government to protect their "natural rights," especially their right to the ownership and enjoyment of private property. The government was limited by the terms of the compact and by "natural law." It was contrary to natural law for a government to take property without the consent of the owners, Locke wrote, and Americans noted in particular his sentence: "If any one shall claim a power to lay and levy taxes on the people by his own authority, and without such consent of the people, he thereby invades the fundamental law of property, and subverts the end of government." To Americans of the 1760s and 1770s it was clear that the British government was flouting the law of nature as well as the will of God. And, according to Locke, if a government should persist in exceeding its rightful powers, men would be released from their obligation to obey it. What was more, they would have the right to make a new compact and establish another government.

### THE TEA EXCITEMENT

From time to time after 1770 Americans resisting British law broke the comparative stillness in America with such deeds as the seizure of a revenue ship on the lower Delaware, the burning of another (the *Gaspee*) in Narragansett

Bay, and the tarring and feathering of a customs officer on the streets of Boston. Not till 1773, however, did Americans reassert their revolutionary principles with anything approaching the unity and vigor of former years.

Tea revived the dispute. The East India Company, with a large stock of unsalable tea on hand, was nearly bankrupt, and Lord North induced Parliament to go to the company's relief with the Tea Act of 1773. This law permitted the company to export its product to America without paying any of the usual taxes except the tea tax still remaining from the original Townshend duties. With these privileges the company could undersell American merchants who bought their tea supplies in England.

Lord North, like others in his office before him, was surprised by the reaction of the Americans. He had not expected the tea-importing merchants in the colonies to like the new law, for it threatened to drive them out of business and replace them with a giant monopoly. But the colonists—especially the women—were excessively fond of tea. Lord North thought they would be so glad to get it cheap that they would swallow the hated tea tax along with it. Instead, they renounced their beloved beverage and turned for the time being to such substitutes as coffee and chocolate.

Meanwhile, with strong popular support, leaders in various colonies made plans to prevent the East India Company from landing its cargoes in colonial ports. In Philadelphia and New York determined men kept the tea from leaving the company's ships, and in Charleston they stored it away in a public warehouse. In Boston, having failed to turn back the three ships in the harbor, the followers of Samuel Adams staged a spectacular drama. On the evening of December 16, 1773, three companies of fifty men each, masquerading as "Mohawks," passed between the protecting lines of a tremendous crowd of spectators, went aboard, broke open the tea chests, and heaved them into the water. As the electrifying news of the Boston "tea party" spread, other sea-ports followed the example and held tea parties of their own.

When the Bostonians refused to pay for the property they had destroyed, George III and Lord North decided upon a policy of coercion, to be applied not against all the colonies but only against Massachusetts—the chief



**Taking the Pledge**

*This British caricature, entitled "A Society of Patriotic Ladies, at Edenton in North Carolina," was published in London in March 1775. It ridicules the American buy-at-home movement. The women are emptying their tea canisters and signing a pledge, which reads "We the Ladies of Edenton do hereby Solemnly Engage not to Conform to that Pernicious Custom of Drinking Tea, or that we the aforesaid Ladies will not promote the Wear of any Manufacture from England until such time that all Acts which tend to Enslave this our Native Country shall be Repealed."* (Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, bequest of Charles Allen Munn, 1924)

center of resistance. In four acts of 1774 Parliament proceeded to put this policy into effect. One of the laws closed the port of Boston, another drastically reduced the local and provincial powers of self-government in Massachusetts, still another permitted royal officers to be tried in other colonies or in England when accused of crimes, and the last provided for the quartering of troops in the colonists' barns and empty houses.

These Coercive Acts were followed by the Quebec Act, which was separate from them in origin and quite different in purpose. Its object was to provide a civil government for the French-speaking, Roman Catholic inhabitants of Canada and the Illinois country. The law extended the boundaries of Quebec to include the French communities between the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. It also granted political rights to Roman Catholics and recognized the legality of the Roman Catholic Church within the enlarged province. In many ways it was a liberal and much needed piece of legislation.

To many Protestants in the thirteen colonies, however, the Quebec Act was anathema. They were already alarmed by rumors that

the Church of England schemed to appoint a bishop for America with the intention of enforcing Anglican authority upon all the various sects. To them the line between the Church of England and the Church of Rome always had seemed dangerously thin. When Catholics ceased to be actively persecuted in the mother country, alarmists in the colonies began to fear that Catholicism and Anglicanism were about to merge, and at the passage of the Quebec Act they became convinced that a plot was afoot in London for subjecting Americans to the tyranny of the Pope. Moreover, those interested in Western lands believed that the act, by extending the boundaries of Quebec, would reinforce the land policy of the Proclamation Line of 1763 and hinder westward progress.

Had it not been for the Quebec Act, Lord North might have come close to succeeding in his effort to divide and rule the colonies by isolating Massachusetts. As it was, the colonists generally lumped the Quebec law with the Massachusetts measures as the fifth in a set of "Intolerable Acts." From New Hampshire to South Carolina the people prepared to take a united stand.

## Cooperation for War

Revolutions do not just happen: they must be led and organized. From 1765 on, colonial leaders provided a variety of organizations for converting popular discontent into action, organizations that in time formed the basis for an independent government.

### THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

Some of these organizations were local, some colony-wide, and some intercolonial. In many cases the provincial assemblies themselves served as centers of resistance, and sometimes they were replaced or supplemented by extralegal meetings, as when (in 1768) Sam Adams called a convention of delegates from the Massachusetts towns to sit in place of the General Court, which the royal governor had dissolved. Adams and others in various places organized mobs as Sons of Liberty and also set up committees of prominent citizens for a number of

specific purposes. The most famous and most effective were the committees of correspondence. Massachusetts took the lead (1772) with such committees on the local level, a network of them connecting Boston with the rural towns, but Virginia was the first to establish committees of correspondence on an intercolonial basis. These made possible cooperation among the colonies in a more continuous way than had the Stamp Act Congress, the first effort at intercolonial union for resistance against imperial authority. Virginia took the greatest step of all toward united action in 1774 when, the governor having dissolved the assembly, a rump session met in the Raleigh Tavern at Williamsburg, declared that the Intolerable Acts menaced the liberties of every colony, and issued a call for a Continental Congress.

Various elected by the assemblies or by extralegal meetings, delegates from all the thirteen colonies except Georgia were present when, in September 1774, the Continental



Congress convened in Philadelphia. The delegates divided into moderates and extremists, and the more extreme members seized the upper hand. At the outset they showed their strength by designating Carpenters' Hall as the meeting place. This was the headquarters of the Philadelphia Carpenters' Company, and some members complained that its selection was an unseemly attempt to curry favor with the city's artisans. In the ensuing sessions of the Congress, however, the extremists were unable to carry through a program quite so thorough as some of them would have liked.

A majority of the delegates in Carpenters' Hall agreed upon five major decisions. First, in a very close vote, they defeated the plan of Joseph Galloway for a colonial union under British authority, a plan (much like the Albany Plan) which included a legislative council made up of representatives from the colonial assemblies and a president-general to be appointed by the King. Second, they drew up a somewhat self-contradictory statement of grievances, conceding to Parliament the right to regulate colonial trade but demanding the elimination of all oppressive legislation passed since 1763, and they addressed a petition to George III as their "Most Gracious Sovereign." Third, they approved a series of resolutions from a Suffolk County (Massachusetts) convention recommending, among other things, that military preparations be made for defense against possible attack by the British troops in Boston. Fourth, they agreed to nonimportation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption as means of stopping all trade with Great Britain, and they formed a "Continental Association" to see that these agreements were carried out. Fifth, the delegates adjourned to meet again the next spring, thus indicating that they conceived of the Continental Congress as a continuing organization.

Through their representatives in Philadelphia the colonies had, in effect, reaffirmed their autonomous status within the Empire and declared economic war to maintain that position. The more optimistic of the Americans supposed that economic warfare alone would win a quick and bloodless victory, but the more pessimistic had their doubts. "I expect no redress, but, on the contrary, increased resentment and double vengeance," John Adams said to Patrick Henry: "we must fight." And Henry replied, "By God, I am of your opinion."

During the winter of 1774-1775 the enforcement of the nonimportation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption agreements proved increasingly difficult as people in the middle colonies and in the South, viewing the Continental Association as hardly less tyrannical than the British government, began to complain against the sacrifices they were compelled to make—all for the sake of those troublemakers in Massachusetts!

During the winter the Parliament in London debated proposals for conciliating the colonists. Lord Chatham (William Pitt) urged the withdrawal of troops from America, Edmund Burke urged the repeal of the Coercive Acts, but in vain; and not even Chatham and Burke thought of renouncing parliamentary authority over the colonies. Lord North, conceding less than Burke or Chatham, introduced a set of proposals of his own, and Parliament approved them early in 1775. The essence of these so-called Conciliatory Propositions was that the colonies, instead of being taxed directly by Parliament, should tax themselves at Parliament's demand. With this offer Lord North intended to redivide Americans by appealing to the disgruntled moderates. But his offer was too grudging, and it came too late. It did not reach America till after the first shots of war had been fired.

## LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

For months the farmers and townspeople of Massachusetts had been gathering arms and ammunition and training as "minutemen," ready to fight on a minute's notice. The Continental Congress had approved preparations for a defensive war, and these citizen-soldiers only waited for an aggressive move by the British regulars in Boston.

In Boston, General Thomas Gage, commanding the British garrison, knew of the warlike bustle throughout the countryside but thought his army too small to do anything until reinforcements should arrive, though some of his less cautious officers assured him that Americans were cowards, and Major John Pitcairn insisted that a single "small action" with the burning of a few towns would "set everything to rights." When General Gage received orders to arrest the rebel leaders Sam Adams



### **The Battle of Lexington**

*A contemporary engraving by Amos Doolittle. It pictures the American version of the affair of April 19, 1775, at Lexington. In the center is shown "the party who fired first," at the command of Major Pitcairn, on horseback. In the foreground are some of the fallen and the fleeing members of the "Provincial Company of Lexington" (minutemen). The more prominent buildings on the edge of the square, or green, are the Public Inn at the left of the large tree and the Meeting House at the right of it. Behind the Meeting House are companies of British regulars marching along the road to Concord. (Courtesy of the New York Public Library, Stokes Collection)*

and John Hancock, known to be in the vicinity of Lexington, he still hesitated, but when he heard that the minutemen had stored a large supply of gunpowder in Concord (eighteen miles from Boston) he at last decided to act. On the night of April 18, 1775, he sent a detachment of about 1,000 men out from Boston on the road to Lexington and Concord. He intended to surprise the colonials with a bloodless coup.

But during the night the hard-riding horsemen William Dawes and Paul Revere warned the villages and farms, and when the redcoats arrived in Lexington the next day, several dozen minutemen awaited them on the common. Shots were fired and some of the minutemen fell, eight of them killed and ten more wounded. Advancing to Concord, the British burned what was left of the powder supply after the Americans hastily had removed most of it to safety. On the road from Concord back to Boston the 1,000 troops, along with 1,500 more who

met them at Lexington, were harassed by the continual gunfire of farmers hiding behind trees, rocks, and stone fences. Before the day was over, the British had lost almost three times as many men as the Americans.

The first shots had been fired, but who had fired the first shot? According to the Lexington minutemen, Major Pitcairn upon his arrival had shouted, "Disperse, ye rebels!" and when this command was disregarded he had given the order to fire. According to the British officers and soldiers, one of American guns had flashed first. The truth is still unknown, but the fact remains that the rebels succeeded in circulating their account well ahead of the British version, and they adorned it with horrible tales of redcoat atrocities. The effect was to rally to the rebel cause thousands of colonists, North and South, who previously had been lukewarm in its support. A war was on, and most Americans believed the enemy had started it.

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# The American Revolution



## Five

'The Revolution was effected before the war commenced—the Patriot leader John Adams said afterward. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people. What Adams meant was that long before 1775 Americans had come to take for granted a high degree of political and economic liberty and they were bound to resist by force if necessary, any serious infringement of it. He did not mean they had already decided upon complete independence, for that decision was not made until after the fighting had begun. Nor did he mean that all the people ever made up their minds in favor of the revolutionary cause, for according to his own estimate a third of the people opposed it.

The actual fighting seems insignificant in comparison with more recent war. Battle deaths on the American side totaled less than 5,000. Cannons tossed out iron balls that did no damage unless they made a direct hit, and an alert soldier could see them coming and get out of the way. The Pennsylvania rifle, which some of the Patriots carried, was fairly accurate at a range of one hundred yards, but the more common smoothbore musket was not, and its flintlock misfired when wet. A military campaign was almost out of the question except in good weather.

Yet the war as the Patriots fought it, old-fashioned though it was in some respects, had one feature that made it new and revolutionary in itself. In previous wars comparatively small numbers of professional soldiers had served for pay. In this one the people on the American side took up arms in their own cause. Though their armies seldom numbered more than a few thousand at any one time, a total of almost 400,000 men enlisted (most of them for short terms) during the eight years that the war lasted.

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### George Washington

*From 1772 to 1795 the Maryland-born artist and taxidermist Charles Willson Peale painted from life more than a dozen portraits of George Washington, under whom he served as a soldier during the Revolutionary War. This portrait, which conveys something of the moral as well as the physical grandeur of Washington, shows him in the uniform of commander in chief at his Princeton headquarters in 1776. (The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts)*

Its consequences also were revolutionary. The first of the modern wars against colonialism, it brought into being a new nation which, though weak and insecure at the start, was eventually to grow into one of the greatest powers of all time. The ideals the war aroused provided inspiration for future

generations not only in the United States but also in other countries. One of the leading revolutionaries of 1776, Thomas Paine, averred that the war "contributed more to enlighten the world, and diffuse a spirit of freedom and liberality among mankind, than any human event . . . that ever preceded it."

## The States United

In the American Revolution a war for autonomy on the part of the united colonies soon turned into a war for independence on the part of the United States. This inchoate nation, with a population less than a third as large as the nine million of Great Britain, and with economic and military resources proportionately still smaller, faced a tremendous task of mobilizing for the war. The task was further complicated by divisions among the people, who persisted in disagreeing about war aims.

### ORIGINAL WAR AIMS

Three weeks after the battles of Lexington and Concord, when the Second Continental Congress met in the State House in Philadelphia, the delegates (again from every colony except Georgia, which was not represented until the following autumn) agreed in their determination to support the war but disagreed about its objects. At one extreme the Adams cousins, John and Samuel, leaned toward independence (though they did not yet avow it), and at the other extreme John Dickinson of Pennsylvania hoped for an early reconciliation with Great Britain. Most of the delegates, holding views that ranged between those of Dickinson and the Adamses, disregarded Lord North's Conciliatory Propositions as insincere but voted reluctantly for one last appeal to the King in the Olive Branch Petition. Then, on July 6, 1775, they adopted a Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking up Arms, announcing that the British government had left the American people with only two alternatives, "uncon-

ditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers or resistance by force," and that the people had decided to resist.

So, for the first year of the war, the Americans were fighting for a redress of grievances within the British Empire, not for independence. During that year, however, many of them began to change their minds, for various reasons. For one thing, they were making sacrifices so great—as in the Battle of Bunker Hill, the bloodiest engagement of the entire war and one of the most sanguinary anywhere in the eighteenth century—that their original war aims seemed incommensurate with the cost. For another thing, they lost much of their lingering affection for the mother country when she prepared to use Indians, Negro slaves, and foreign mercenaries (the hated "Hessians") against them. And, most important, they felt that they were being forced into independence when the British government replied to the Olive Branch Petition with the Prohibitory Act, which closed the colonies to all overseas trade and made no concession except an offer of pardon to repentant rebels. The Americans desperately needed military supplies to continue the war, and now they could get them from abroad in adequate amounts only if they broke completely with Great Britain and proceeded to behave in all respects as if they comprised a sovereign nation.

These feelings in America were not caused, but were clarified and crystallized, by the publication, in January 1776, of the pamphlet *Common Sense*. Its author, unmentioned on the title page, was Thomas Paine, who with letters of introduction from Benjamin Franklin

**"Common Sense"**  
*Title page of the first edition of Thomas Paine's pamphlet, published anonymously in Philadelphia on January 10, 1776. Afterward Paine enlisted as a soldier and accompanied Washington's army on its retreat across New Jersey. During that time he wrote a series of essays under the collective title of The Crisis, to arouse support for the Patriot cause. The first of the Crisis papers contains the sentence "These are the times that try men's souls." After the American Revolution Paine went to France and took an active part in the French Revolution, which began in 1789. In support of the French revolutionary cause he wrote The Rights of Man (1791-1792). He also wrote The Age of Reason, in which he attacked some aspects of conventional Christianity and expounded his own rationalistic beliefs. Returning to America in 1802, he spent his last years as a lonely, obscure man.*  
*(Library of Congress)*

# COMMON SENSE;

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF

AMERICA,

On the following interesting

SUBJECTS.

- I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.
- II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.
- III. Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs.
- IV. Of the present Ability of America, with some miscellaneous Reflections.

Man knows no Master save ceasing Heaven,  
 Or those whom choice and common good ordain.

THOMSON.

PHILADELPHIA;

Printed, and Sold, by R. BELL, in Third Street.

MDCCCLXXVI

had emigrated from England to America less than two years before. Though long a failure in various trades, Paine now proved a brilliant success as a revolutionary propagandist. In his pamphlet he argued with flashing phrases that it was plain common sense for Americans to separate from an England rotten with the corrupt monarchy of George III, brutal as an unnatural parent toward her colonies, responsible for dragging them in to fight her wars in the past, and no more fit as an island kingdom to rule the American continent than a satellite was fit to rule the sun. "O! ye that love mankind! ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth!" Month after month the pamphlet was reprinted until many thousands of copies were in circulation, passing from hand to hand and being read and reread.

## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Despite the persuasion of *Common Sense*, the American people were far from unanimous, and they entered upon a bitter debate over the merits of dependence and independence. While the debate raged, the Continental Congress advanced step by step toward a final break. Congress opened the ports of America to all the world except Great Britain, entered into communication with foreign powers, and recommended to the various colonies that they establish governments without the authority of the Empire, as in fact they already were doing. Congress also appointed a committee to draft a formal declaration and, on July 2, 1776, before approving the declaration, adopted a resolu-

tion "That these United Colonies are, and, of right, ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." Two days later Congress approved the Declaration of Independence, which gave reasons for the action already taken.

The thirty-three-year-old Virginian Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, his fellow committeemen Benjamin Franklin and John Adams revised the wording a little, and Congress made more drastic changes, striking out passages that condemned the British people and the slave trade. As Adams afterward observed, Jefferson said nothing new in composing the document. Its very virtue, in fact, lay in his noble phrasing of beliefs already widespread in America. He planned the document in two main parts. In the first part he restated the familiar contract theory of John Locke, who had held that governments were formed to protect the rights of life, liberty, and property, but Jefferson gave the theory a more humane twist by referring instead to the rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." In the second part he listed the alleged crimes of the King who, with the backing of Parliament, had violated his contract with the colonists and thus had forfeited all claim to their loyalty.

Once adopted, the Declaration of Independence exerted an incalculable influence upon later history. With its democratic principle that "all men are created equal," it stimulated humanitarian movements of various kinds in the United States, and abroad it helped to inspire the French Revolution with its Declaration of the Rights of Man. More immediately, it led to increased foreign aid for the struggling rebels and prepared the way for France's all-out intervention on their side. It steeled American Patriots to carry on without regard to offers of a peace short of the stated goal. And at the same time it divided Americans more cruelly and more extensively than they ever had been divided before.

At the news of the Declaration of Independence, crowds gathered to cheer, fire guns and cannons, and ring church bells in Philadelphia, Boston, and other places, but there were many people in America who did not rejoice. Some

had disapproved of the war from the beginning, and others had been willing to support it only so long as its aims did not conflict with their basic loyalty to the King. These people, numerous but in the minority, refused to cross the new line that had been drawn. Either openly or secretly they remained Loyalists, as they chose to call themselves, or Tories, as they were known to the Whig or Patriot majority. Among the Loyalists were rich families and poor ones, highly educated men (like the scientist Benjamin Thompson) and illiterates, townspeople, and backwoodsmen. Among the Loyalist leaders were royal officials and Anglican clergymen who had sided with the British government throughout the prewar decade of controversy, plus a few of the wealthy merchants and large planters who earlier had belonged to the Patriot party but who seceded from it after the Declaration of Independence.

The remaining Patriots continued to be divided among themselves. On the one hand were men like John Adams and George Washington who wished to see independence achieved with comparatively little social change in America, but whose ranks were thinned by the loss of their former allies, now Loyalists. On the other hand were men like Thomas Jefferson who desired to accomplish democratic and humanitarian reforms along with independence. Thus (as in other wars, including World War II) patriotic Americans held different as well as common aims, some intending only to smite the foreign enemy, others aspiring also to lead a popular crusade at home.

## STATE GOVERNMENTS

While waging war, the Patriots also busied themselves with providing a government for the new nation. With the outbreak of war they set up provisional governments based upon existing assemblies or emergency conventions as the royal officials fled from their positions in one colony after another. When the colonies became states, the Patriots formed permanent governments with written constitutions. The constitution-making procedure varied from state to state. In Rhode Island and Connecticut the legislatures merely revised the old colonial charters, and in most of the other states the legislatures, though not elected for that purpose,



## Slavery in Massachusetts [1783]

In the case of Quork Walker, who was a slave suing his master, the Chief Justice of Massachusetts gave the following charge to the jury:

*As to the doctrine of slavery and the right of Christians to hold Africans in perpetual servitude, and sell and treat them as we do our horses and cattle, that (it is true) has been heretofore countenanced by the Province Laws formerly, but nowhere is it expressly enacted or established. It has been a usage—a usage which took its origin from the practice of some of the European nations, and the regulations of British government respecting the then Colonies, for the benefit of trade and wealth. But whatever sentiments have formerly prevailed in this particular or slid in upon us by the example of others, a different idea has taken place with the people of America, more favorable to the natural rights of mankind, and to that natural, innate desire of Liberty, with which Heaven (without regard to color, complexion, or shape of noses) has inspired all the human race. And upon this ground our Constitution of Government, by which the people of this Commonwealth have solemnly bound themselves, sets out with declaring that all men are born free and equal—and that every subject is entitled to liberty, and to have it guarded by the laws, as well as life and property—and in short is totally repugnant to the idea of being born slaves. This being the case, I think the idea of slavery is inconsistent with our own conduct and Constitution; and there can be no such thing as perpetual servitude of a rational creature, unless his liberty is forfeited by some criminal conduct or given up by personal consent or contract.*

took it upon themselves to draft new constitutions. Thomas Jefferson, for one, insisted that the fundamental law should come from the people of each state, who should elect constitutional conventions and then vote on ratification. Actually, conventions were held in only three states, referendums in only five, and both a convention and a referendum in only one—Massachusetts.

The new constitutions, all pretty much alike in general outline though different in detail, were both conservative and democratic. They were conservative in retaining essentially the same structure as the old colonial governments. Except in Georgia and Pennsylvania, both of which experimented with a unicameral legislature, each constitution provided for a two-house legislature, with an elected senate taking the place of the former governor's council. All the constitutions except Pennsylvania's continued the office of governor, though most of them denied the holder of this position the bulk of the executive powers he had enjoyed in colonial days. All of the new documents confirmed and extended the ideas of popular rule that long had been put into practice; every one of them included a bill of rights, and some had

preambles stating that sovereignty (the ultimate power of government) resided in the people. To vote in any state a man had to own only a modest amount of property, in some states just enough so that he could qualify as a taxpayer. To hold office he had to meet a somewhat higher property requirement, essentially as in pre-Revolutionary times. Only in New Jersey were women allowed to vote, and eventually they were deprived of the suffrage even there. But, considering the widespread ownership of property, something approaching universal manhood suffrage existed from the beginning in all the states.

Once in operation, the new states proceeded to make advances in social as well as political democracy. In one way or another they multiplied opportunities for land ownership and thus enlarged the voting population. For instance, they eliminated the legal rights of primogeniture and entail, which before the war had helped to maintain a landed aristocracy by transferring an entire estate to the oldest son (when a man died without a will) and by keeping the estate intact from generation to generation (when a man by entailment willed that the property never be sold). The new states



#### Killing the Goose

This cartoon, which appeared in a colonial newspaper early in 1776, shows the British government's ministers killing the American goose that laid the Empire's golden eggs. The point of the cartoon is hardly an exaggeration, for the government's policies were, indeed, having the effect of destroying England's profitable trade with the colonies (John Carter Brown Library, Brown University).

also made considerable progress toward religious freedom, though some retained religious tests for officeholding. New York and the Southern states, in which the Church of England had been tax-supported, soon saw to its complete disestablishment, and the New England states stripped the Congregational Church of some of its privileges. Virginia, in its Declaration of Rights, boldly announced the principle of complete toleration and, in 1786, enacted the principle in the Statute of Religious Liberty, which Jefferson long had championed.

The new states took steps toward personal as well as religious freedom. All of them except South Carolina and Georgia prohibited the importation of slaves, and even South Carolina laid temporary wartime bans on the slave trade. After the first antislavery society in America (founded in 1775) began its agitation, and prominent Southerners including Jeffer-

son and Washington declared their opposition to slavery Virginia and other Southern states changed their laws so as to encourage manumission, Pennsylvania passed a gradual-emancipation act (1780), and Massachusetts through a decision of its highest court (1783) held that the state's bill of rights outlawed the ownership of slaves. Besides all this, five of the new states put provisions into their constitutions for the establishment of public schools, and all soon began to revise their criminal codes so as to make the punishment more nearly fit the crime.

#### THE CONFEDERATION

While the separate states were fashioning constitutions and recasting their legal systems, the Second Continental Congress tried to create a

## The Articles of Confederation [1781]

1 [Article II] "Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every Power, Jurisdiction and right, which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled."

2 [Article IV] The free inhabitants of each state "shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of free citizens in the several states," and "full faith and credit" shall be given by each state to the judicial and other official proceedings of other states.

3 [Article V] Each state shall be represented in Congress by no less than two and no more than seven members, shall pay its own delegates, and shall have one vote (regardless of the number of members).

4 [Article VI] No state, without the consent of Congress, shall enter into diplomatic relations or make treaties with other states or with foreign nations, or engage in war except in case of actual invasion.

5 [Article VIII] A "common treasury" shall be supplied by the states in proportion to the value of their land and improvements; the states shall levy taxes to raise their quotas of revenue.

6 [Article IX] Congress shall have power to decide on peace and war, conduct foreign affairs, settle disputes between states, regulate the Indian trade, maintain post offices, make appropriations, borrow money, emit bills of credit, build a navy, requisition soldiers from the states, etc. — but nine states must agree before Congress can take any important action.

7 [Article X] A Committee of the States — consisting of one delegate from each state, shall act in the place of Congress when Congress is not in session.

8 [Article XIII] No change shall be made in these Articles unless agreed to by Congress and afterwards confirmed by the legislatures of every state.

written form of government for the states as a whole. No sooner had the Congress appointed a committee to draft a declaration of independence than it appointed another to draft a plan of union, and after much debate and many revisions the Congress, in November 1777, adopted the committee's plan, the Articles of Confederation.

The Articles of Confederation provided for a central government very similar to the one already in actual operation, though it increased the powers of Congress somewhat. Congress was to have the powers of conducting war, carrying on foreign relations, and appropriating, borrowing, and issuing money, but not the powers of regulating trade, levying taxes, or drafting troops. For troops and taxes it would have to make requisitions upon the states. There was to be no separate, single, strong executive (the "President of the United States"

was to be merely the presiding officer at the sessions of Congress), but Congress itself was to see to the execution of the laws through an executive committee of thirteen, made up of one member from each state, through ad hoc and standing committees for specific functions, and through such administrative departments as it might choose to create. There were to be no Confederation courts, except for courts of admiralty, but disputes among the states were to be settled by a complicated system of arbitration. These states were to retain their individual sovereignty, each of the legislatures electing and paying the salaries of two to seven delegates to Congress, and each delegation, no matter how numerous, having only one vote. At least nine of the states (through their delegations) would have to approve any important measure, such as a treaty, before Congress could pass it, and all thirteen state legislatures

would have to approve before the Articles could be ratified or amended.

Ratification was delayed by differences of opinion about the proposed plan. Some Americans were willing enough to accept a relatively weak central government, but others preferred to see it strengthened. The people of all the small states insisted upon equal state representation, but those of the large states thought they should be represented in proportion to their population. Above all, the states claiming Western lands wished to keep them, but the rest of the states demanded that the whole territory be turned over to the Confederation government. The "landed" states, among which Virginia had the largest and best claim, founded their claims upon colonial charters, with the exception of New York, which based its rights upon a protectorate over the Iroquois Indians. The "landless" states, particularly Maryland, maintained that as the fruit of common sacrifices in war the Western land had become the rightful property of all the states. In this dispute selfish interests as well as high principles were involved, for rival groups of land speculators schemed to secure the cancellation or confirmation of private grants already made. At last New York gave up its rather hazy claim, and Virginia made a qualified offer to cede its lands to Congress. Then Maryland, the only state still holding out against ratification, approved the Articles of Confederation, and they went into effect in 1781.

The Confederation government came into being in time to conclude the war and make the peace. Meanwhile, during the years of fighting from 1775 to 1781, the Second Continental Congress served as the agency for directing and coordinating the war effort of the people of the thirteen states.

## MOBILIZING FOR WAR

Congress and the states faced overwhelming tasks in raising and organizing armies, providing the necessary supplies and equipment, and paying the costs of war.

Supplies of most kinds were scarce at the outset, and shortages persisted to the end. Though America, being a land of hunters, contained numerous gunsmiths, they were not

able to meet the wartime demand for guns and ammunition, nor were they able to produce heavy arms. Some of the states offered bounties for the encouragement of manufactures, especially for the production of guns and powder, and Congress in 1777 established a government arsenal at Springfield, Massachusetts. Even so, the Americans themselves managed to manufacture only a small fraction of the equipment they used. They supplemented their own manufactures with matériel that fell into their hands upon the seizure of forts like Crown Point and Ticonderoga (in 1775), the surrender of British armies, and the capture of supply ships by American privateers. But they got most of their war materials through importations from Europe, particularly from France.

In trying to meet the expenses of war, Congress had no power to tax the people, and the states had little inclination to do so. Indeed, cash was scarce in the country, as it always had been. When Congress requisitioned the states for money, none of them contributed more than a tiny part of its share. At first Congress hesitated to requisition goods directly from the people, but finally allowed army purchasing agents to take supplies from farmers and pay with certificates of indebtedness. Congress could not raise much money by floating long-term loans at home, since few Americans could afford war bonds and those few usually preferred to invest their funds in more profitable ventures, such as privateering. So Congress had no choice but to issue paper money, and Continental currency came from the printing presses in large and repeated batches. The states added sizable currency issues of their own.

With goods and coin so scarce and paper money so plentiful, prices rose to fantastic heights and the value of paper money fell proportionately. There quickly appeared all the usual evils of wartime profiteering, and more too. One reason why Washington's men suffered from shortages of food and clothing at Valley Forge during the terrible winter of 1777-1778 was that American farmers and merchants preferred to do business with the British forces occupying nearby Philadelphia, since the British could pay in gold or silver coin. To check the inflationary trend, Congress advised the states to pass laws for price control, but soon saw the futility of such measures and

recommended that they be dropped. Eventually, in 1780, Congress decided that the states should accept Continental currency from taxpayers at the rate of forty paper dollars to one silver dollar, then send it to Congress to be destroyed. If the currency was not turned in for taxes at a fortieth of its face value, it became utterly worthless, hence the expression "Not worth a Continental." By this time Congress was able to meet the most pressing of its financial needs by borrowing from abroad.

The states added to their financial resources by seizing lands belonging to the Crown and to colonial proprietors. In 1777 Congress recommended that the states also confiscate and sell the property of Loyalists active in the British cause, then lend the proceeds to the central government. The states were eager enough to expropriate the Loyalists, though not to make the requested loan. Already Patriots were punishing Tories in various ways, taking from them the rights of citizenship, barring them from certain occupations, and imposing special taxes and heavy fines upon them. The seizure and sale of Loyalist property, resulting incidentally in a widened distribution of land ownership among the buyers, netted the states a total of several million pounds, in value if not in actual cash. Around 100,000 of the Loyalists themselves, either voluntarily or because of banishment, left the country during the course of the war, the most numerous group going to Quebec and laying the foundations of English-speaking Canada.

The willingness of the remaining Tories to aid the British depended somewhat on the proximity of British troops and the prospects for the British cause. As for the Patriots, only a small proportion of them were willing to volunteer for the American armies once the first surge of patriotism at the start of the war had passed. The states had to resort to persuasion and force, to bounties and the draft, the bounties being commonly in the form of land scrip, since land was an asset with which the states were well supplied. Thus recruited, militiamen remained under the control of their respective states. Many of the recruits were expert marksmen and on the average they were physically bigger and stronger than the British regulars. Yet man for man they were no match for the redcoats in battle, since they lacked the regu-

lars' fine training, discipline, and esprit de corps.

Foreseeing some of the disadvantages of separately organized militias, Congress called upon the states (while they were still colonies) to raise troops for a regular force, the Continental army, and agreed that it should have a single commander in chief. George Washington, forty-three years old, sober and responsible by nature, possessed more command experience than any other American-born officer available. And he had political as well as military qualifications. An early advocate of independence, he was admired and trusted by nearly all the Patriots. A Virginian, he had the support not only of Southerners but also of Northerners who feared that the appointment of a New Englander might jeopardize sectional harmony. As the unanimous choice of the delegates, he took command in June 1775.

Congress chose well. Throughout the war Washington kept faithfully at his task, despite difficulties and discouragements that would have daunted a lesser man. With the aid of foreign military experts such as the Marquis de Lafayette and the Baron von Steuben he succeeded in building and holding together the Continental army, though at no time did it number as many as 10,000 men (not counting the militia of the separate states). The morale of the soldiers, who were getting short rations and low pay, became so bad that mutinies broke out (in 1781) among the Pennsylvania and New Jersey troops. Meanwhile, during the dark winter of Valley Forge, some congressmen and army officers, conspiring together in the so-called Conway Cabal, hinted at replacing Washington as commander in chief. He, on the other hand, complained often and bitterly against his employers, the delegates in Congress, who seemed to do too little in supplying him with manpower and equipment, and too much in interfering with his conduct of military operations. The faults were not all on the side of Congress, which had its difficulties too. Washington had his shortcomings as a military commander and he lost more battles than he won. Yet he was a great war leader. For all his faults and failures, he led the army and the nation to ultimate victory with his supreme steadiness and courage, his sacrificial devotion to the cause of independence.

## The War for Independence

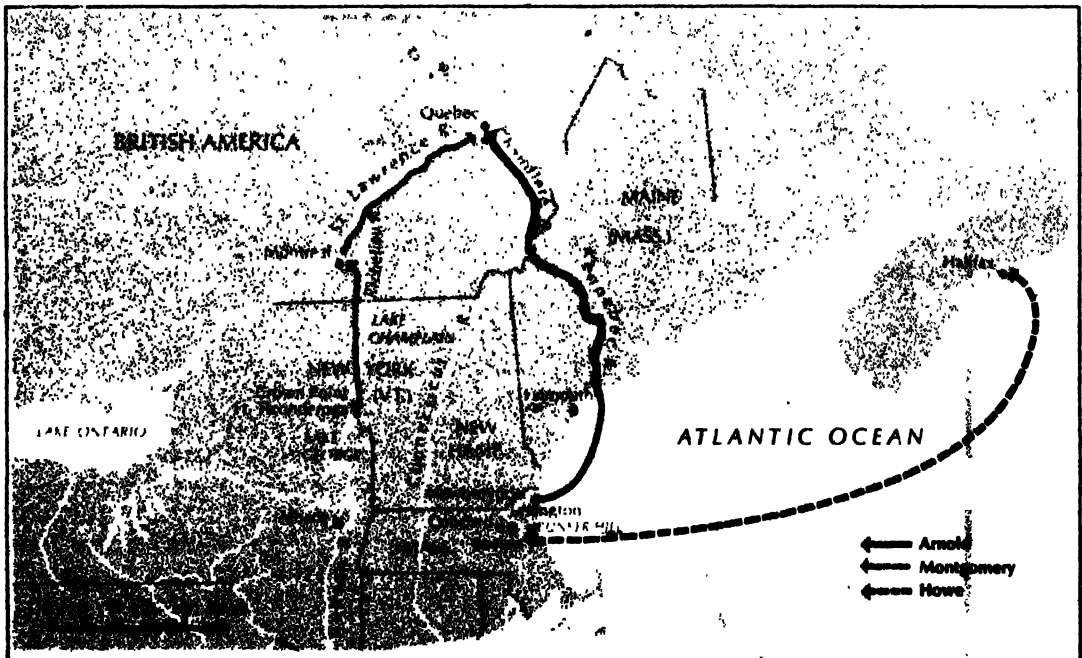
In their war for independence the Americans had the advantage of fighting on their home terrain, far from the center of British might. They also had the benefit of tremendous foreign aid, especially after the American war merged with a world contest in which Great Britain faced the strongest powers of Europe as actual or potential foes. But the success of the Americans was also due to their own patriotic effort. Though losing battle after battle, they avoided catastrophes and gained at least a few decisive victories through the exertions of thousands of armed men under the majestic generalship of George Washington. And, having held their own in war, they won the peace because their diplomats shrewdly made the most of the opportunities that the world situation offered.

### THE FIGHTING, TO 1777

For about the first year of the fighting (1775–1776) the colonial armed forces took the offensive. After the British retreat from Concord

and Lexington, the Americans besieged the army of General Gage in Boston, and though suffering severe casualties in the Battle of Bunker Hill (actually fought on Breed's Hill, June 17, 1775), they inflicted even greater losses upon the enemy and thereafter they continued to tighten the siege. Far to the south, at Moore's Creek Bridge in North Carolina, a band of Patriots crushed an uprising of Tories (February 27, 1776) and thereby discouraged British plans for invading the Southern states with Loyalist aid. Far to the north the Americans themselves undertook an invasion of Canada. The fearless Benedict Arnold threatened Quebec after a winter march of incredible hardship. He was joined by Richard Montgomery, who took command of the combined forces. When they launched an attack, Montgomery was killed and Arnold wounded; though the latter kept up a siege for a time, the Quebec campaign ended in frustration. In the spring a civilian commission headed by the seventy-year-old Franklin returned from the north without success in its efforts to secure the allegiance of Canada as

### The War in the North 1775

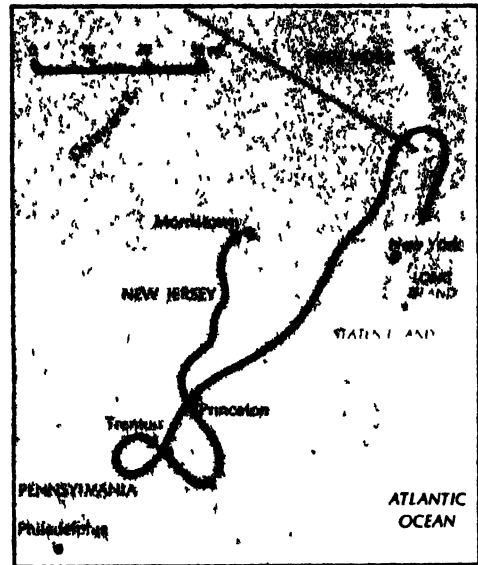


the fourteenth state. Already, however, the British had given up their attempt to hold Boston and had departed with hundreds of Loyalist refugees (March 17, 1776) for Halifax. Within a year from the firing of the first shots, the enemy had been driven from American soil.

The enemy soon returned, to put the Americans on the strategic defensive for the remainder of the war. During the summer of 1776, in the weeks immediately following the Declaration of Independence, the waters around the city of New York became filled with the most formidable military force Great Britain ever had sent abroad. Here were hundreds of men-of-war and troopships and a host of 32,000 disciplined soldiers under the command of the tall and affable Sir William Howe. Having no grudge against the Americans, Howe would rather awe them into submission than shoot them, and he believed that most of them, if given a chance, would show that they were at heart loyal to the King. In a parley with commissioners from Congress he offered the alternatives of submission with royal pardon or battle against overwhelming odds.

To oppose Howe's awesome array, Washington could muster only about 19,000 poorly armed and trained soldiers, including both Continentals and state troops, and he had no navy at all. Yet without hesitation the Americans chose continued war, which meant inevitably a succession of defeats. The British pushed the defenders off Long Island, compelled them to abandon Manhattan Island, and drove them in slow retreat over the plains of New Jersey, across the Delaware River, and into Pennsylvania.

Warfare being for eighteenth-century Europeans a seasonal activity, the British settled down for the winter with occupation forces at various points in New Jersey and with an outpost of Hessians at Trenton on the Delaware. But Washington did not content himself with sitting still. On Christmas night 1776, he daringly recrossed the icy river, surprised and scattered the Hessians, and occupied the town. Then he advanced and drove off a force of red-coats at Princeton. Unable to hold either Princeton or Trenton, he finally took refuge for the rest of the winter in the hills around Morristown. As the campaign of 1776 came to an end, the Americans could console themselves with the thought that they had won two minor victo-

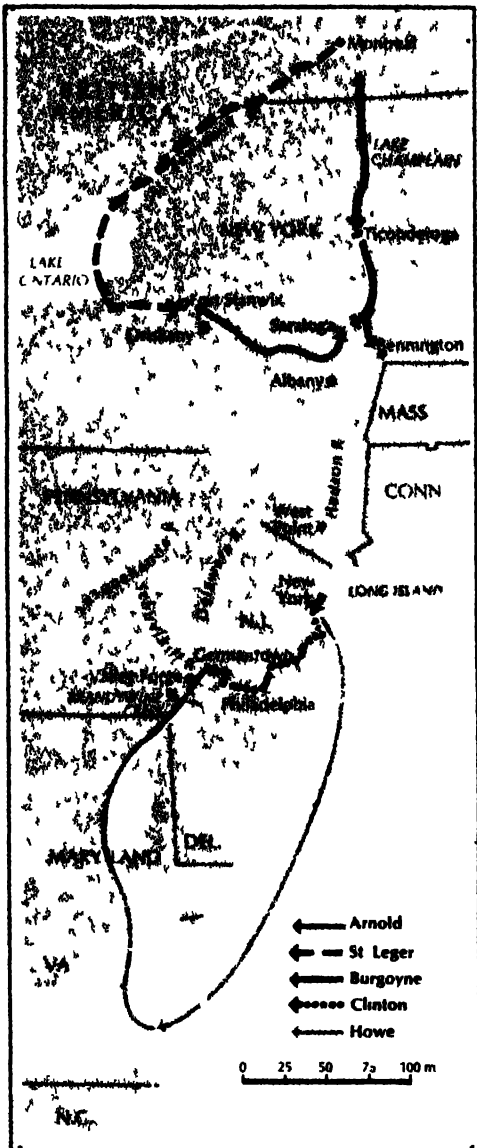


**Washington's Retreat 1776**

ries, that their main army was still intact, and that the invaders were really no nearer than ever to the decisive triumph that Howe so confidently had anticipated.

For the campaign of 1777 the British devised a strategy that, if Howe had stuck to it, might have cut the United States in two and prepared the way for final victory by Great Britain. According to this plan, Howe would move from New York up the Hudson to Albany, while another force, in a gigantic pincers movement, would come down from Canada to meet him. One of Howe's ambitious younger officers, the dashing John Burgoyne, "Gentleman Johnny," secured command of this northern force and elaborated upon the plan by preparing for a two-pronged attack along both the Mohawk and the upper Hudson approaches to Albany.

Then, fortunately for the United States, Howe adopted a different plan for himself, intending to dispirit the Patriots and rally the Loyalists by seizing the rebel capital, Philadelphia. Taking the bulk of his forces away from New York by sea, Howe landed at the head of Chesapeake Bay, brushed Washington aside at the Battle of Brandywine (September 11), and proceeded to occupy Philadelphia. Meanwhile, Washington after an unsuccessful attack at



British Campaigns 1777

Germantown (October 4) went into winter quarters at Valley Forge, and the scattered Congress resumed its sittings in York, Pennsylvania.

Up north, Burgoyne was left to carry out his twofold campaign without aid from Howe. Sending Colonel Barry St. Leger with a fast-moving force up the St. Lawrence River toward Lake Ontario and the headwaters of the

Mohawk, Burgoyne with his own army advanced directly down the upper Hudson Valley. He got off to a flying start, easily taking Fort Ticonderoga and an enormous store of powder and supplies, and causing such consternation that Congress removed General Philip Schuyler from command in the north and replaced him with Horatio Gates, in response to the demands of New Englanders.

By the time Gates took command, Burgoyne already faced a sudden reversal of his military fortunes in consequence of two staggering defeats. In one of them, at Oriskany, New York (August 6), Nicholas Henkimer with his German farmers checked a force of St. Leger's Indians and Tories, so that Benedict Arnold had time to go to the relief of Fort Stanwix and close off the Mohawk Valley to St. Leger's advance. In the other battle, at Bennington, Vermont (August 16), the Bunker Hill veteran John Stark with his New England militiamen severely mauled a detachment that Burgoyne had sent out to seek supplies. Short of materials, with all help cut off, Burgoyne fought a couple of costly engagements and then withdrew to Saratoga, where Gates surrounded him. Burgoyne was through, and he knew it. On October 17, 1777, he ordered what was left of his army, nearly 5,000 men, to lay down their arms.

Not only the United States but also Europe took note of the amazing news from the woods of upstate New York, and France in particular was impressed. The British surrender at Saratoga, a great turning point in the war, led directly to an alliance between the United States and France.

## FOREIGN FRIENDS

Shortly after the fighting had begun, Congress appointed a secret committee with Franklin as chairman for the purpose of corresponding with "our friends" in Great Britain and, more significantly, in "other parts of the world." Later Congress replaced this agency with a Committee for Foreign Affairs and then (1781) with a Department of Foreign Affairs, the immediate ancestor of the State Department. As far as possible, however, Congress as a whole conducted foreign relations, often overruling or by-passing the agencies it created.



# WHY HISTORIANS DISAGREE “Facts” Versus Interpretations

Was the American Revolution essentially a civil war, in which the ordinary people of the colonies were struggling to get democracy at home? Did slaves in the Old South keep alive their African culture and maintain cohesive, well knit families? Was the United States to blame for the start of the Cold War with the Soviet Union?

On these and many other questions, American historians have disagreed among themselves. Conflicting points of view on several of these issues are presented in this book in a series of essays entitled *Where Historians Disagree*. Why do they disagree?

In totalitarian countries there are few controversies of this kind. In the Soviet Union, for example, historians are required to follow the official, Marxist-Leninist interpretation of history. They cannot openly discuss such questions as their own government's responsibility for the Cold War. Only in a free society do scholars have the right to seek to know the past as it actually was. In the search for truth they are obligated only to the impartial standards of historical scholarship. They are limited only by their personal infirmities and biases.

American historians, in writing about their country, have come to agree on most of the facts. But there are countless facts, and historians have differed as to which are the most important and should therefore be emphasized. Hence the differences in the interpretation of certain phases of American history.

Historians may disagree because of differences in their personal backgrounds (geographic, social, religious, racial, ethnic) or in their historical philosophies, their theories or assumptions about the nature of history and about historical methods, which lead them to focus on particular aspects of a subject. From one period to another the prevailing view of historians on some phase of the past may change as a result of new evidence coming to light or new public issues rising to prominence. Since the study of the past helps us to understand the problems of the present, it is only natural that historians in each generation should emphasize those features of earlier times that seem most relevant to contemporary preoccupations.

This is not to say that present concerns should dictate historical views. Present concerns can provide only the questions, not the answers. Nor is it to say that all interpretations are equally valid. In time one view may prove to be right and the opposing view wrong. More commonly there is something of value in both, or in several interpretations. Often it is a matter of each of the contending historians getting hold of only one part of the subject, like the blind men examining the elephant in the fable. Usually the controversies lead to further research and to deepened understanding, if not also to a new consensus.

In these controversies (with few exceptions) the historians are, to repeat, not disputing the facts. The question is not ‘What happened?’ but ‘What is the *significance* of what happened?’ Even where historians disagree the most, they agree much more than they disagree.

Even before the Declaration of Independence, Congress drew up a treaty plan for liberal commercial arrangements with other countries and prepared to send representatives to the capitals of Europe for negotiating treaties – which necessarily would mean European recognition of the United States as one of the sovereign nations of the world. “Multia diplomats,” John Adams called the early American representatives abroad, and unlike the diplomatic regulars of Europe they knew little of the formal art and etiquette of Old World diplomacy. Yet most of them were well acquainted with certain fundamentals, for they had gained much diplomatic experience through their dealings with one another in intercolonial affairs, with the Indian tribes in war and peace, and with the British government as colonial

agents in London. Since overseas communication was slow and uncertain (it took from one to three months to cross the Atlantic), these representatives abroad sometimes had to interpret the instructions of Congress very freely and make crucial decisions entirely on their own.

Of all the possible foreign friends of the United States, the most promising and most powerful was France, who still resented her defeat at the hands of Great Britain in 1763. France, under King Louis XVI, who came to the throne in 1774, had an astute and determined foreign minister in the Count de Vergennes, an expert practitioner of Machiavellian principles, thoroughly trained in the cutthroat diplomacy of eighteenth-century Europe. Vergennes soon saw that France had a vital interest in the outcome of the American war. If the

#### The Continental Army at Valley Forge

*Many foreigners served as officers in the Continental army; too many, it seemed to General Washington. Most of them received their commissions from Congress, not from the commander in chief. Once he referred to the foreigners as “hungry adventurers.” But he deeply appreciated the assistance of a few of the volunteers from abroad, especially the Marquis de Lafayette and the Baron von Steuben. A veteran of the Prussian army, Steuben came to the United States in 1777, and Washington appointed him inspector general, with overall charge of military discipline, instruction, and supply. Steuben reorganized the Continental army, provided for improved training and drill of soldiers, and wrote a manual of army regulations. The painting by Edwin A. Abbey, which hangs in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, shows Steuben instructing troops in Washington’s camp at Valley Forge, near Philadelphia, during the winter of 1777–1778. After the war he settled in New York. (Courtesy of the Pennsylvania Department of Commerce)*



## WHERE HISTORIANS DISAGREE

# The American Revolution

In their accounts of the American Revolution historians at one time concentrated on the Patriot aim of autonomy within the British Empire and then complete independence from it. These historians differed among themselves in regard to revolutionary motivation, some of them emphasized political ideals, others stressed economic interests. But all of them took as their central theme the struggle between the American colonists and the British government.

Eventually, a number of writers began calling attention to struggles *within* the colonies as well. These writers maintained that the Revolution involved not only the question of home rule but also the question who should rule at home. It was according to them a movement toward both independence and democracy. Thus in a study of New York politics from 1770 to 1776 (1909) and in *The Eve of the Revolution* (1918) Carl L. Becker described the Revolution as in part a kind of civil war—a contest for power between American radicals and conservatives, one that led to the democratization of American politics and society. J. F. Jameson elaborated upon the idea in his slim but influential volume *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement* (1926). The stream of revolution once started could not be confined within narrow banks, but spread abroad upon the land. Jameson wrote: "Many economic desires, many social aspirations were set free by the political struggle; many aspects of colonial society profoundly altered by the force that let loose." The social change tended in the direction of levelling democracy.

This view long prevailed, but recently it has been sharply challenged. The most forceful attack on it comes from Robert E. Brown who shows in *Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780* (1955) that before 1776 Massachusetts was already very close to a complete democracy—with practically all men enjoying the right to vote. Brown argues that at least in Massachusetts and probably also in other colonies the aim of the Revolutionary leaders was to preserve the democratic liberties that already existed. And E. S. Morgan, in a bold and concise reinterpretation, *The Birth of the Republic, 1763-1789* (1956), holds that most Americans were in basic agreement on political principles, thus he endorses the older view of the Revolution as a struggle between the colonies and the British government.

The debate goes on, with no final decision on points of interpretation, but the net result is greatly to broaden our knowledge of the Revolutionary period.

colonies should assert and maintain their independence, the power of Great Britain would be seriously weakened by the loss of a good part of her empire, and the power of France would be correspondingly increased.

From the start of the troubles between England and her colonies, the French had maintained observers in America to report the course of events, and after the shooting began both Americans and Frenchmen put out diplomatic feelers. In London the Massachusetts colonial agent Arthur Lee met the French dramatist and political genius Caron de Beaumarchais, and the two discussed the possibilities of secret assistance to the colonies. Beaumarchais reported to Vergennes, and Vergennes dispatched an army officer to America to encourage the rebellion, urge independence, and promise supplies. After several meetings with Vergennes' spokesman, Franklin's committee of secret correspondence sent Silas Deane to France as a "merchant" to make "commercial" arrangements. In consequence of these arrangements, Beaumarchais shipped large quantities of munitions to America through a fictitious trading firm that he had rigged up to disguise the fact that most of the shipments were financed by the King of France and the King of Spain. Whether this sort of lend-lease was a gift or a loan later became a question of bitter dispute between Congress and Beaumarchais.

After the Declaration of Independence, Franklin himself went to France to get further aid and outright recognition of the United States. A natural diplomat, the equal if not the superior of the world's best at that time, Franklin immediately captivated Frenchmen of all classes—and Frenchwomen too. But Vergennes hesitated. At the first news of the American Declaration, he was inclined to make a treaty recognizing United States independence, but he did not wish to act without Spain; and when reports came of Washington's defeat on Long Island, he decided to wait and watch the military developments in America. If and when the Americans should show that they had a real chance of winning, then France would intervene. Meanwhile Vergennes was willing to go on financing the American war. He initiated a series of subsidies which in time amounted to nearly \$62 million and a series of loans which totaled over \$6 million.

The news that Vergennes and Franklin were waiting for—the news from Saratoga—arrived in London on December 2 and in Paris on December 4, 1777. In London the knowledge of Burgoyne's surrender caused Lord North to decide in favor of a peace offensive, an offer of complete home rule within the Empire for Americans if they would quit the war. In Paris, learning of Lord North's intentions from a British spy, Franklin let the word get out for Vergennes to hear. Vergennes worried. If the Americans should accept the British offer, his opportunity to weaken France's traditional enemy would be gone, and if they could not get what they wanted from France, they might accept. Without waiting for Spain to go along with France, Vergennes on February 6, 1778, signed two treaties with Franklin and Deane, one a treaty of commerce and amity, and the other, which was supposed to be secret, a treaty of conditional and defensive alliance, to take effect if Great Britain should go to war with France. Congress and the King quickly ratified the treaties, and Congress received and banqueted a minister from France while the King welcomed Franklin as minister from the United States.

France soon drifted into war with Great Britain, and in 1779 Spain, with objectives of her own, declared war as an ally of France though not of the United States; Spain refused even to receive officially the American representative in Madrid, John Jay. A year later the Netherlands, persisting in its profitable trade with both the French and the Americans, found itself also at war with Britain and agreed to a treaty with the United States. The League of Armed Neutrals—Russia, Denmark, Sweden—assumed a defiant attitude toward Britain, but refrained from considering war and refused to have any official dealings with the upstart nation in America.

Indirectly all the countries arrayed in hostility to Britain contributed to the ultimate success of the United States by complicating the task of the latter's foe. Directly the Netherlands provided loans to the Americans but was powerless to give military or naval support, and Spain gave unofficial subsidies but confined her military and naval activities to strictly Spanish objectives. France (for her own reasons, of course) was the true friend in need of the Americans. Not only did she furnish them

# **The Course of American Art**

## **I. THE COLONIAL PERIOD:**

### **Pattern Books and Indigenous Invention**



*Plate 1 Anonymous,  
MRS ELIZABETH FREAKE  
AND BABY MARY  
(Worcester Art Museum  
Worcester Massachusetts)*

In adjusting to the difficult conditions of their new environment, the early settlers of the American colonies had little time for luxuries. And yet from almost the very moment of their arrival, the colonists began to create a distinctly personal artistic heritage. In architecture and painting, as well as in toolmaking, American craftsmen produced objects based on European precedent but modified to achieve an art uniquely American in character.

With the relaxation of strict Puritan injunctions against painting, portraiture flourished in seventeenth-century New England. For those who could afford it, primarily the wealthy merchants, portraits

were among the few luxuries to be found in the colonial home. Little is known of the itinerant portrait painters, for they generally left their works unsigned. The artist was simply referred to as a limner or liner (from an archaic word meaning "to draw or paint"), and is identified today by associating him with the family name of his subject, the anonymous craftsman who painted "Mrs. Elizabeth Freake and Baby Mary" (Plate 1) is known as the Freake limner.

The linear style of the Freake limner had its basis in medieval Tudor tradition, which, although no longer practiced at the English court, had been imported from rural England to the colonies. The essentially flat,

linear portrait lacks a feeling of movement or perspective but the untrained artist conveys an instinctive sense of design. By reducing the background to a dark unbroken area and emphasizing the intricate patterns of lace, ribbon and embroidery, the artist documents with precision how a wealthy merchant's wife and child might have dressed in seventeenth-century New England.

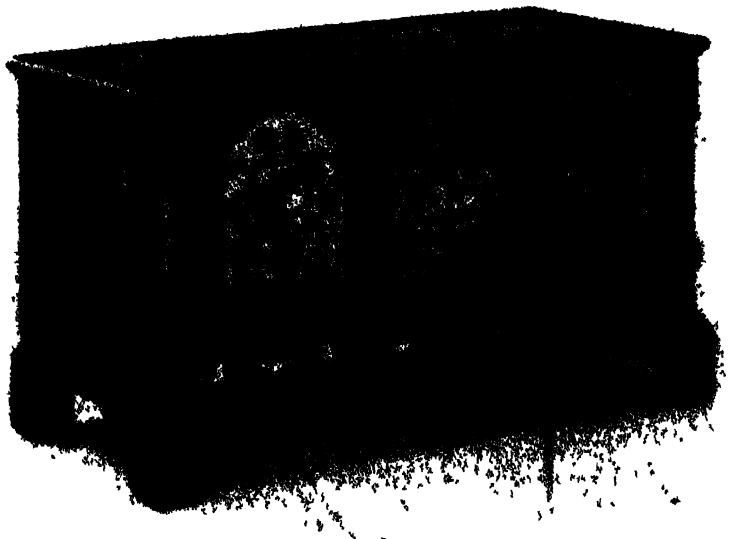
In the German and Dutch settlements of rural New York and Pennsylvania, craftsmen continued to work in the idiom of their native countries. Their furniture design is particularly noteworthy for its simple, sturdy construction and colorful painted decoration. The brightly ornamented "Marriage Chest of Margaret Kernan," 1788 (*Plate 2*), was built and decorated by German immigrants who settled in eastern Pennsylvania. This richly carved bridal chest, a common article of furniture in German and Dutch colonial homes, was made of tulipwood and painted in vivid colors with stylized flowers and birds. The upper section is divided into three arched niches, with the two flanking the central inscription panel featuring gaily painted prancing unicorns—symbols of virginity—surrounded by the popular tulip motif. Similar use of stylized flowers can be found in other contemporary crafts, including silver and needlework. A particularly fine example is the crewelwork embroidery done by Mary Bulman for a bed

hanging in the late eighteenth century (*Plate 3*).

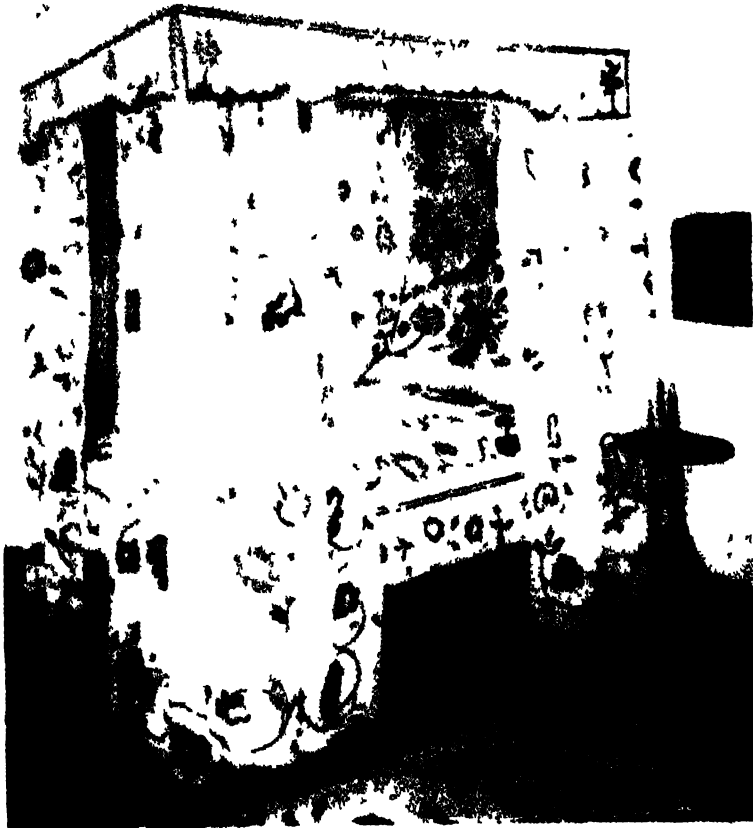
In the southern colonies, especially Virginia, cultural ties to the mother country were very strong. The great plantation homes around Williamsburg were undoubtedly suggested by the palatial mansions of contemporary England. "Carter's Grove" in James City County, constructed between 1750 and 1753, was designed and executed by local builders relying extensively on pattern books which had been brought from England to the colonies. These pattern books, written by contemporary Englishmen, provided models from which Americans could adapt their own designs. The elegant entrance hall (*Plate 4*) presents in scale and proportion, as well as richly detailed ornament, one of the finest examples of colonial craftsmanship.

In the New England area also, architectural designs drew upon England for inspiration. At first, copying what they remembered from their provincial background, the earliest settlers adapted medieval forms to the colder climate of New England. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the northern colonists began to borrow directly from contemporary English sources, making such necessary modifications as reducing the size of the houses and substituting easily worked wood for stone.

One of the leading architects of the colonial



*Plate 2* Anonymous,  
MARRIAGE CHEST  
OF MARGARET KERNAN  
(Courtesy, The Henry Francis  
du Pont Winterthur Museum)



*Plate 3 Mary Bulman,  
CREWEL BED HANGING  
(Old Gaol Museum, York, Maine)*

*Plate 4 Anonymous, CARTER GROVE ENTRANCE HALL (Photo by Sandak, 1960)*





*Plate 5 Peter Harrison, TOURO SYNAGOGUE INTERIOR (Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue, Photo by Sandak)*



period was Peter Harrison. Although a merchant by profession, Harrison's interest in architecture led him to collect a library of architectural pattern books from which he borrowed various designs for buildings in Newport, Cambridge, and Boston. One of his most remarkable commissions was for the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island. For the interior, Harrison's inspiration was the English architect Inigo Jones's two-story hall in Whitehall Palace, London, which he ingeniously adapted to the requirements of a Jewish congregation. The elaborately carved columns and ornate pulpit (*Plate 5*) were based on plates found in the pattern books of Englishmen James Gibbs and Batty Langley. The richly decorated building, erected between 1759 and 1763, has survived as the oldest extant American synagogue and is a credit to the superbly trained woodcarvers and carpenters of the colonies.

With most woodcarvers actively engaged in architectural decoration and detail, sculpture in the colonies was largely restricted to signs, gravestones, and weather vanes. The wooden figure of a felon (*Plate 6*), which hung outside the jail in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, is crudely carved; but the execution is forceful, and severe facial features and clenched fists add a touch of originality to this traditional folk rendering.

Although most of the early artists were immigrants, born and sometimes trained in Europe, by the middle of the eighteenth century America produced its first major native-born painter. Born in Long Island, Robert Feke became one of the leading portrait painters traveling between Boston and Philadelphia. Little is known of his early life and training, but between 1741 and 1750 he received many commissions from the mercantile aristocracy of the north. Though his opportunity to see original English painting was limited by his isolation in the colonies, his work shows a strong influence of the English Baroque style, and he was undoubtedly aware of contemporary European taste through the engravings and mezzotints which were then being imported into America. In Feke's portrait of Isaac Winslow, done in 1748 (*Plate 7*), the figure is set in a light-filled outdoor environment. Through contrasting patterns of lights and darks, Feke achieves a sense of monumentality.

Also around the middle of the eighteenth century, in response to the growing affluence of the merchant class, there appeared in the

colonies a style of painting characterized by a lighter and more graceful manner. Placing greater emphasis on material objects and their tactile values, it reflected the then dominant mode of the French and English courts. One practitioner of this style—known as the Rococo—was Joseph Blackburn, who came to Boston from London. In 1755 Blackburn was commissioned to paint a large family group for the same Isaac Winslow whom Robert Feke had painted seven years earlier. In contrast to Feke's formal linear structure, Blackburn's family portrait (*Plate 8*) attempts to achieve an air of elegance through animated—though artificial—poses. The glossy surface treatment of the fine materials and fabrics and the use of pastel

*Plate 6: Anonymous,  
KENT COUNTY JAIL SIGN  
(The Rhode Island Historical Society;  
Photo by Sandak)*



*Plate 7. Robert Feke, ISAAC WINBLOW (Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)*



tones were consistent with the Rococo ideal.

The influence of Blackburn on the next generation of American artists is particularly apparent in the work of John Singleton Copley, the most important colonial painter of the eighteenth century. Copley was born in Boston in 1738 and was trained by his stepfather, an engraver, in the traditional Baroque style. The appearance of Blackburn and his elegant treatment of surface and subject must have been a revelation to the young artist. Although Copley was handicapped by lack of firsthand experience with major European painting, he began to develop a purely personal style based on the nuances of light and shade and the contour of line. His 1769 portrait of the Connecticut merchant Isaac Smith (*Plate 9*) captures the vibrant energy of the sitter and provides an exciting color contrast between the subject's plum suit and the brilliant blue drapery behind him.

Copley, however, became dissatisfied with

life in provincial New England. His desire to paint historical and religious subjects was thwarted by the absence of patronage. Just before the outbreak of the Revolution he traveled to Europe and eventually settled in London. There he developed his painting technique in accordance with contemporary Rococo taste. Although he became a respected member of the English artistic establishment, his later paintings, on a more grandiose scale, lacked the freshness of his earlier, American, works.

The departure of Copley from the colonies on the eve of the Revolution was not typical of American artists and craftsmen. Many of the country's leading artisans were among the new nation's most ardent supporters. The famous patriot Paul Revere was a highly respected silversmith who took over his father's shop in 1754. A few years before the Revolution Revere had sat for a portrait by Copley, in which the craftsman is seen at his workbench contemplating one of his creations.

*Plate 8 Joseph Blackburn, ISAAC WINSLOW AND HIS FAMILY (Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)*





*Plate 9*  
John Singleton Copley,  
ISAAC SMITH  
(Yale University Art Gallery)

Revere's ability as a silversmith is exemplified by his "Liberty Bowl" (*Plate 10*), a silver punch bowl he executed in 1768 for the Massachusetts House of Representatives, in commemoration of their decision not to rescind a seditious letter. The smooth surface and elegant shape were inspired by Chinese porcelain bowls which had been recently imported to the Colonies. Revere, like many of his compatriots in the arts, continued to contribute after the birth of the United States to a newly emerging national style.

*Plate 10* Paul Revere, LIBERTY BOWL  
(Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

most of their money and munitions, but she also provided a navy and an expeditionary force that, with Washington's army, made possible the decisive victory at Yorktown

## VICTORY AT YORKTOWN

During the first two years of the war the important campaigns and battles had taken place in the North, but after Saratoga the fighting in that part of the country developed into a stalemate. Replacing General Howe, Sir Henry Clinton withdrew from Philadelphia and took

what had been Howe's army back to New York. Washington used most of his army to keep watch around New York while (1778-1779) sending part of it to chastise the Indians along the frontier for their horrible massacres in the Cherry Valley (New York) and the Wyoming Valley (Pennsylvania). During that same winter George Rogers Clark, with orders from the state of Virginia and not from Washington or Congress, led a heroic expedition over the mountains and redeemed the settlements of the Illinois country from the British and their Indian allies. In 1779 the treason of Benedict Arnold shocked Washington and Pa-



### John Paul Jones

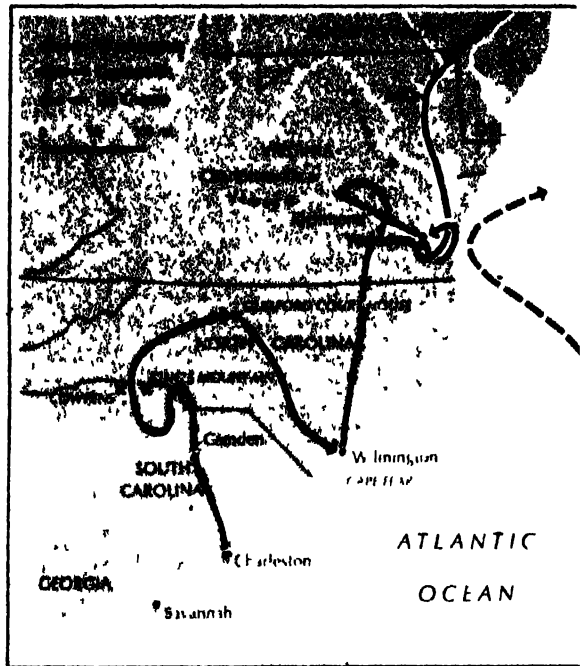
*A Scot by birth, a Virginian by adoption, Jones became for Americans the greatest naval hero of the Revolutionary War. As captain of the sloop of war Ranger, he took to France the official news of the Saratoga victory and then proceeded to harry the British coast, boldly sinking ships within sight of the land and occasionally going ashore to raid. In France, through Franklin's influence, he obtained a small fleet with the Bonhomme Richard (named for the "Poor Richard" of Franklin's famous almanac) as the flagship. The Bonhomme Richard under Jones' command defeated the British frigate Serapis in a spectacular duel (September 23, 1779). Captain Jones created such a nuisance for the British that he compelled them to keep a part of their naval force close to home. This is an early portrait by an unknown artist (Library of Congress).*

tricts everywhere but did little military damage except for the transfer of Arnold's services to the British, since his scheme for betraying the Hudson River stronghold of West Point was frustrated in the nick of time. During the final two years of fighting, all the significant action occurred in the South.

Sir Henry Clinton, a rather timid strategist, planned a Southern offensive that was supposed to end the American will to resist, but he put the command of the operation in the hands of Lord Cornwallis, an able general but one as rash as Clinton himself was cautious, and capable of changing plans and disobeying orders in mid-campaign. Clinton and Cornwallis based their strategy on assumptions that were not to prove facts. They assumed that seapower would enable them to move their troops from point to point along the coast with ease, that the difficulties of overland travel would make American counteraction ineffectual, and that Loyalists would rise en masse to welcome and assist the redcoats as liberators. With the conquered South as a base, Clinton and Cornwallis thought they could dispose of the rest of the country at their leisure.

While it was true that in Georgia and the Carolinas there were numerous Tories, some of them disgruntled veterans of the Regulator movement, it was also true that in Virginia as in Massachusetts the mass of the people were fiercely patriotic and that even in the lower South the Loyalist strength was grossly overestimated. Actually, having the support of most of the countryside, the Patriot forces were to be better off than the British in matters of logistics and supply. And the French, while far from able to maintain consistent control of the coastal waters, were finally to have a fleet in the right place at the right time.

The British succeeded in taking Savannah (December 29, 1778) and Charleston (May 20, 1780), inspiring many Loyalists to take up arms, and advancing far into the interior. At every turn they were harassed, however, by Patriot guerrillas led by such resourceful fighters as Thomas Sumter, Andrew Pickens, and Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox." Penetrating to Camden, well up the Wateree River in South Carolina, Cornwallis met and crushed (August 16, 1780) a combined force of militiamen and Continentals under Horatio Gates, who did not quite deserve his fame as the hero of Saratoga.



**Road to Yorktown 1780-1781**

Congress recalled Gates, and Washington gave the Southern command to Nathanael Greene, a former Quaker blacksmith of Rhode Island and probably the ablest of all the American generals of the time next to Washington himself.

Before Greene arrived in the war theater along the North and South Carolina line, the tide of battle already had begun to turn against Cornwallis. At King's Mountain (October 7, 1780) a band of Patriot riflemen from the backwoods killed, wounded, or captured an entire force of 1,100 New York and South Carolina Tories, upon whom Cornwallis had depended as auxiliaries. Once arrived, Greene confused and exasperated Cornwallis by dividing the American forces into fast-moving contingents while refraining from a showdown in open battle. One of the contingents inflicted what Cornwallis admitted was "a very unexpected and severe blow" at Cowpens (January 17, 1781). At last, having received the reinforcements he awaited, Greene combined all his forces and arranged to meet the British on ground of his own choosing at Guilford Court House, North Carolina. After a hard-fought

battle (March 15, 1781) Greene was driven from the field, but Cornwallis lost so many men that he decided at last to abandon the Carolina campaign.

Cornwallis withdrew to Wilmington, where he hoped to get supplies by sea, and then he moved north to carry on raids in the interior of Virginia. But Clinton, concerned for the army's safety, ordered him to take up a position on the peninsula between the York and James rivers and wait for water transport to New York or Charleston. So Cornwallis retreated to Yorktown and began to build fortifications there.

Washington made plans with the Count de Rochambeau, commander of the French expeditionary force in America, and with Admiral de Grasse, commander of a French fleet in American waters, for trapping Cornwallis. Washington and Rochambeau marched a Franco-American army from the New York vicinity to join Lafayette in Virginia while de Grasse sailed with additional troops for Chesapeake Bay and the York River. These joint operations, perfectly timed and executed, caught Cornwallis between land and sea. After a few shows of resistance, he asked for terms on October 17, 1781, four years to the day after the capitulation of Burgoyne, and two days later he surrendered his whole army of more than 7,000.

The fighting was over, but the war was not quite won. The United States continued to be something of an occupied country, with British forces holding the seaports of Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington, and New York. Before long a British fleet met and defeated Admiral de Grasse's fleet in the West Indies, ending Washington's hopes for further seapower assistance. So far as the naval and military situation was concerned, the British still held the upper hand in America. And peace was yet to be made

binding France to make no separate peace. The United States had promised in its treaty of alliance to conclude no peace without France. Now, if Spain should fight on till she won Gibraltar back, and if France should stick by Spain, and the United States by France, the Americans might be at war forever. That, however, was not the real danger to American interests. The danger was that Spain, to get Gibraltar or American territory, might enter into a deal with Great Britain at the expense of the United States and that France might feel compelled to go along with Spain. In making peace, the United States had as much to fear from its allies as from its enemy.

When, in 1779, Spain in the role of mediator proposed a peace conference, Congress promptly named John Adams as the American delegate and sent him instructions to enter into no negotiations unless Great Britain first recognized the United States as "sovereign, free, and independent." Adams, already abroad as a militia diplomat, proceeded to Paris and remained there waiting for new peace opportunities after the Spanish proposal had been forgotten. The blustery Adams did not get along with Vergennes as well as the soft-spoken Franklin did. Vergennes sent to America a new minister, La Luzerne, to do something about the Adams nuisance. Lobbying with congressmen and playing up to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, La Luzerne secured the replacement of the single delegate with a whole delegation, including Franklin and John Jay as well as Adams, and La Luzerne virtually dictated the delegation's instructions. These instructions told the prospective peacemakers to keep in close touch with the French government, tell it everything, follow its advice. Thus the United States was put into the hands of Vergennes by the time (1781) Austria and Russia made their joint mediation offer that led eventually to a general peace settlement.

Then the victory at Yorktown, by giving the Americans new bargaining power, rescued them from the worst of their dependence upon Vergennes. In England, Cornwallis' defeat provoked outcries against continuing the war and demands for cultivating American friendship as an asset in international politics. Lord North resigned and Lord Shelburne emerged from the political wreckage as prime minister. British emissaries appeared in France to talk

## WINNING THE PEACE

Until Yorktown, peace had been for Americans an illusory and at times a dangerous proposition; and the prospects even after that victory, though improved, were not ideal. The trouble was with Spain. She entered the war solely to recover lost territories in America and Europe, above all Gibraltar, and she had an alliance

## Treaty of Paris [1783]

1. "His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States to be free, sovereign and independent States "
- 2 Boundaries shall run, as described in some detail, from Nova Scotia to and through the Great Lakes and the Lake of the Woods, "thence on a due west course to the river Mississippi," down the Mississippi to the thirty-first parallel, and then east to the Atlantic Ocean
- 3 The people of the United States shall have fishing rights and liberties in the waters of British North America
- 4 Creditors on either side "shall meet with no lawful impediment to the recovery of the full value, in sterling money, of all *bona fide* debts heretofore contracted "
- 5 Congress "shall earnestly recommend to the legislatures of the respective States" that they make restitution for confiscated Loyalist property
- 6 There shall be no future confiscations or prosecutions on account of the part that anyone may have taken in the war
- 7 Hostilities shall cease, and "His Britannic Majesty shall, with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction, or carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, withdraw all his armies, garrisons and fleets from the said United States, and from every post, place and harbour within the same "

informally with Franklin. He suggested what he called "necessary" terms of peace, including independence and the establishment of the Mississippi as the western boundary of the United States, and "desirable" terms including the cession of Canada for the purpose of "reconciliation," a "sweet word," as he said. But John Jay, recently arrived from his fruitless mission to Spain, where he had acquired reason to be suspicious of Spaniards and all Europeans, objected to continuing the negotiations on the grounds that the Americans were addressed not as plenipotentiaries of a sovereign nation but as "persons" from "colonies or plantations." The negotiations were delayed until Jay was satisfied.

All along Franklin, Jay, and Adams had kept Vergennes informed of their conversations with British agents, in accordance with the instructions from Congress. Then, one day; Jay learned that Vergennes' private secretary was off on a secret mission to England. Jay feared that Vergennes was going to leave the United States in the lurch and make a separate peace by which Great Britain and Spain would divide between themselves the territory west of the Alleghenies and east of the Mississippi. Such a deal, as Franklin exclaimed, would have "cooped us up within the Allegheny

Mountains." Though Jay was mistaken as to the details of the secret mission, he was right in thinking that Vergennes was suggesting separate negotiations that were to be kept from the American peacemakers and that might have proved disadvantageous to the United States. From that day on, Franklin, Jay, and Adams ceased to inform Vergennes of their diplomacy but went ahead on their own and soon drew up a preliminary treaty with Great Britain. In doing so, they may have violated the spirit but they did not violate the letter of the Franco-American alliance, since they were not making a separate final peace. Of course, they disregarded their instructions from Congress, but those instructions had come originally from Vergennes himself.

After the preliminary articles were signed (November 30, 1782), Jay and Adams left to Franklin the delicate task of telling Vergennes what had been done. Franklin admitted to Vergennes that the Americans perhaps had violated etiquette in failing to keep the French informed, but he trusted that the incident would cause no rift in the Franco-American alliance. Cleverly Franklin observed: "The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us. I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a secret,



and that they will find themselves totally mistaken." Vergennes, dealing with a fellow master of diplomacy, could not say much and was doubtless glad to have an excuse for ending the war regardless of the wishes of his Spanish ally. Franklin coolly asked for another loan from France — and got it!

The final treaty was signed September 3, 1783, when Spain as well as France agreed to end hostilities. It included a number of provisions that Franklin and Jay and Adams had opposed, and some of these were to lead to serious friction with Great Britain and with Spain in the years ahead. Yet it also included essentially the "necessary" terms that Franklin originally had indicated, though not his "desirable"

ones such as the cession of Canada. On the whole the peace was remarkably favorable to the United States in granting a clear-cut recognition of independence and a generous, though ambiguous, delimitation of territory — from the southern boundary of Canada to the northern boundary of Florida and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Indeed, by playing off the powers of Europe against one another, Franklin and his colleagues had achieved the greatest diplomatic success in the history of the United States. With good reason the American people celebrated as the last of the British occupation forces embarked from New York and General Washington at the head of his troops rode triumphantly in.

## **The Confederation's Problems**

As usually happens at the end of a long and hard-fought war, peace in 1783 brought to the American people tasks almost as trying as those of the war itself. Congress, with the inadequate powers granted to it in the Articles of Confederation, did not quite succeed in solving its postwar problems of diplomacy and public finance, though it made a good beginning toward organizing its territories in the West. The states, too, had difficulties with debts and taxes and, in the case of Massachusetts, with an armed uprising.

### **A DISPUTED TREATY**

The peace treaty of 1783 recognized the independence of the United States and granted the new nation a vast domain — on paper — but Americans found it hard to exercise their full sovereignty in fact. At once they ran into serious conflict with both Great Britain and Spain, yet they could not count upon the support of France even though France remained technically America's ally.

Despite the treaty provision calling upon the British to evacuate American soil, British forces continued to occupy a string of frontier posts along the Great Lakes within the United

States. Secret orders to hold these forts went from the Colonial Office in London to the governor general of Canada on April 8, 1784, just one day before King George III proclaimed the peace treaty as being in final effect and called upon all his subjects to obey its terms! The real reason for the secret orders was the Canadian and British desire to maintain points of contact with Indian tribes in the Northwest for the conduct of the fur trade and the continuance of defensive alliances with them. The avowed reason, which was an afterthought, was the alleged failure of the United States to carry out its treaty obligations, particularly in regard to private debts.

These debts, dating from pre-Revolutionary days, were owed by American citizens, mostly Southern planters, to merchants and other creditors in England. The American debtors had no intention of paying — many of them had supported the Revolution in order to gain independence and thus throw off their old obligations. The treaty provided only that the United States should place no obstacle in the way of the collection of the debts, and the United States did place no obstacle in the way. True, the individual states interfered with debt collections, through the passage of debtor stay laws, the issuance of paper money as legal

tender, and the rulings of courts sympathetic with local debtors.

According to the ill-founded British complaints, the United States was violating not only the article regarding private debts but also the one regarding Loyalist property. On this point the treaty said merely that Congress should recommend to the various states that they make restitution to certain categories of Loyalists whose possessions had been confiscated during the war. Congress did recommend, but the states did not respond. The British had not really expected them to. The article was put into the treaty as a gesture of the King's concern for the fate of his faithful subjects. Anticipating that the states would do little or nothing for Loyalist refugees, Parliament itself appropriated money for their relief.

To British allegations of bad faith, Americans countered with the charge that Great Britain, besides refusing to abandon the frontier posts, was disregarding the treaty provision that obligated her to compensate American slaveowners whose slaves had been carried off by the British armies at the end of the war. And the two countries disputed the meaning and application of still another article, the one defining the northeastern boundary of the United States. Over part of its course the boundary was supposed to follow the St. Croix River, but unfortunately the river had two major branches, and the treaty did not specify which of the two was meant.

The peace arrangements led also to a boundary dispute between the United States and Spain. In her settlement with Spain, Great Britain gave back Florida (which had been British from 1763 to 1783) with the Atlantic and the Mississippi specified as its eastern and western limits but with no precise definition of its northern border. In the preliminary treaty with the United States, however, Great Britain had agreed secretly that, if she herself were to keep Florida, its boundary would be set at latitude 32° 28' and that, if she ceded it to Spain, its boundary would be located farther south, at the thirty-first parallel. Afterward the United States insisted upon the more southerly of these lines, but Spain demanded the additional northern strip as rightfully a part of Florida. Spain also claimed extensive territory even north of that, as belong-

ing to her by virtue of her (rather small-scale) military operations in the American West during the Revolutionary War.

There was another conflict between Anglo-American arrangements and the claims of Spain. In their treaty of peace Great Britain and the United States recognized the right of subjects and citizens of both countries to navigate the Mississippi River to its mouth. But Spain, possessing Louisiana as well as Florida and thus occupying both banks of the lower Mississippi, denied that Great Britain had any rights there to grant to the United States. In 1784 Spain exercised her lawful power over her territorial waters by closing the lower Mississippi to American navigation.

#### FAILURES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Thus several provisions of the peace with Great Britain failed to give Americans the benefits they desired and expected, and the treaty omitted entirely still other provisions they had hoped for. Above all, American shippers and traders wanted commercial arrangements that would give them privileges of trading and shipping on equal terms with British subjects in all parts of the British Empire.

No longer colonists, these businessmen, it is true, now had opportunities for exploiting world-wide routes of trade, which before the war had been legally closed to them. Congress proceeded to make satisfactory commercial treaties with the nations of Europe—with France (1778), the Netherlands (1782), Sweden (1783), and Prussia (1785). Congress also agreed to pay protection money to the Sultan of Morocco (1786) so that American merchantmen in the Mediterranean would be free from the depredations of at least some of the Barbary pirates. Without benefit of treaty, American enterprisers opened fabulously profitable trade routes to the Orient, beginning with the voyage of the *Empress of China* in 1784–1785.

Yet, though commerce flourished in new directions, most American trade persisted as much as possible in the old, prewar patterns. In the United States the bulk of imports continued to come from British sources, for Americans were used to British goods, and British merchants knew and catered to American tastes,

offered attractive prices, and extended long and easy credit. To earn the British funds needed to pay for these imports, Americans desired free access to more British markets than were open to them after the war.

In 1784 Congress sent John Adams as minister to London with instructions to get a commercial treaty and speed up the evacuation of the frontier posts. Taunted by the query whether he represented one nation or thirteen, Minister Adams made no headway in England, partly because Congress had no power to retaliate against the kind of commercial warfare that Great Britain was pursuing against the United States. Throughout the 1780s the British government refused even to return the courtesy of sending a minister to the American capital.

The Spanish government, by contrast, was willing to negotiate its differences with the United States, and in 1785 its representative, Don Diego de Gardoqui, arrived in New York (where Congress had moved from Philadelphia) to deal with the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, John Jay. After months of the most friendly conversations, Jay and Gardoqui initialed a treaty (1786). By its terms, the Spanish government would have granted Americans the right to trade with Spain but not with her colonies; would have conceded the American interpretation of the Florida boundary; and (in a secret article) would have joined in an alliance to protect American soil from British encroachments. The United States, besides guaranteeing Spanish possessions in America, would have agreed to "forbear" the navigation of the Mississippi for twenty years, though not to abandon the right of navigation. Jay found it hopeless, however, to secure the necessary nine state votes for the ratification of his treaty by Congress, since the delegates from the five Southern states objected bitterly and correctly that the interests of Southerners in Mississippi navigation were being sacrificed to the interests of Northerners in Spanish trade.

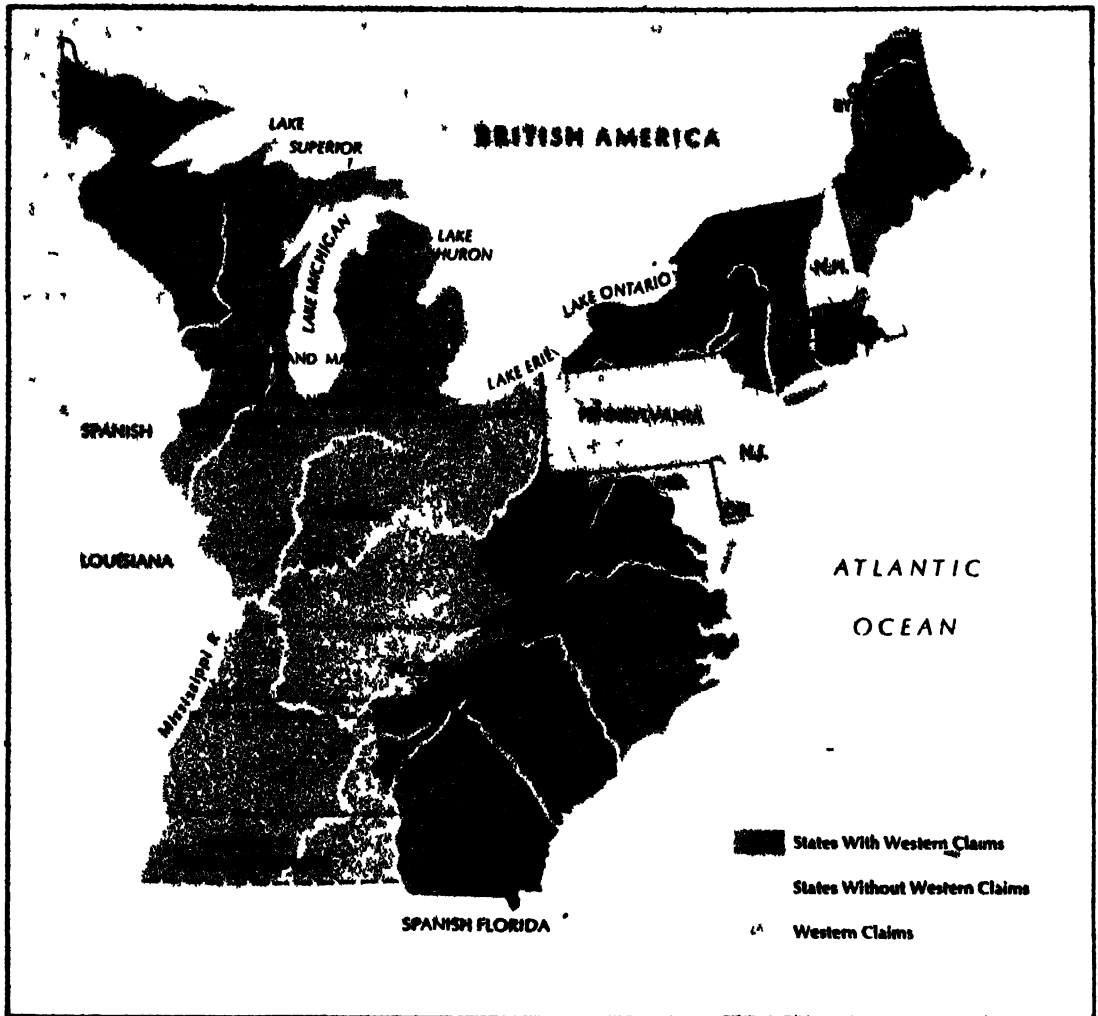
### **THE NEEDS OF THE WEST**

Into the areas of postwar border conflict with Great Britain and Spain moved an unprecedented horde of American settlers during and after the Revolution. When the war began, only

a few thousand lived west of the Appalachian divide; by 1790 their numbers had increased to 120,000. Most of the migrants made the mountain crossing under the auspices of able and far-seeing land promoters. James Robertson and John Sevier led pioneers from North Carolina to the Watauga settlements (1770) and later to the Cumberland Valley (1779), thus laying the foundations for the future state of Tennessee. Richard Henderson, promoter of the Transylvania Company and employer of Daniel Boone, stimulated the growth of Kentucky by selling lands, organizing a provisional government (1776), and having the Wilderness Road hewn out. The managers of the Vandalia Company encouraged migration to what eventually became West Virginia. And the Allen brothers—Ethan, Ira, and Levi—attracted purchasers for their regal holdings of real estate in the Green Mountains of Vermont. The frontiersman usually had to depend upon such speculators for his land title and for other favors, yet he was characteristically an individualist determined to make a future for himself. He and his family, together with thousands of others like him, comprised what was potentially the strongest single factor for redeeming the West for the United States.

But the United States could realize this potentiality only if the government were able to meet the needs of the frontier settler and keep him loyal to its distant authority. The settler needed protection from the Indians, access to outside markets for his surplus crops, and courts with orderly processes of law. In dealing with the West, Congress inherited responsibilities that formerly had baffled King and Parliament.

At first Congress lacked clear-cut jurisdiction over the trans-Appalachian region, and for several years conflicts of authority persisted among Congress, the states, and the frontier settlements themselves. Of course, with Virginia's cession in 1781, the landed states had begun to yield their Western claims to the Confederation. But Virginia had ceded her territory to the north of the Ohio River on the condition that private grants within it be canceled, and for a few years the grantees lobbied successfully to keep Congress from accepting the territory with that stipulation. North Carolina temporarily took back its ceded land, other states postponed



**State Claims to Western Lands 1781**

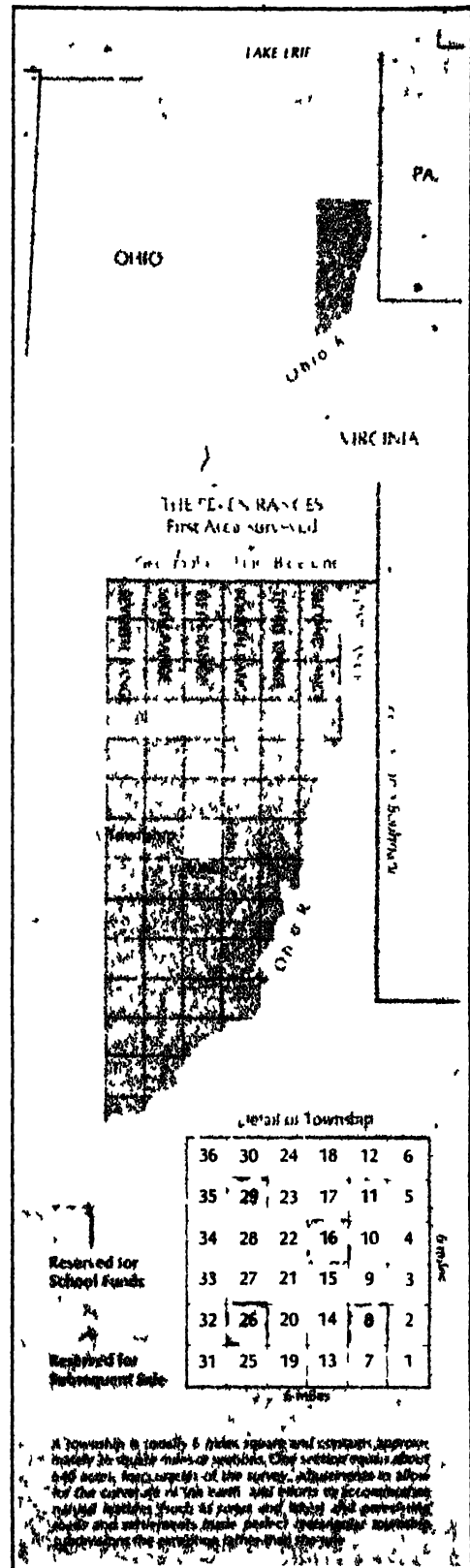
their cessions, and not till 1802 did the last of them, Georgia, give up its claim. Meanwhile these states transferred the actual ownership of most of the land south of the Ohio River to private individuals and companies, and impatient settlers proceeded to set up their own state governments for Frankland or Franklin (Tennessee) and for Kentucky. North Carolina attempted to incorporate Tennessee, and Virginia tried to make Kentucky a Virginia county

### PLANNING FOR THE TERRITORIES

In 1784, having persuaded Virginia to make a new cession without specific restrictions, Congress accepted Virginia's Western lands (not including Kentucky), and began to make policy for the national domain. The most momentous decision, already resolved upon, was that settlements in the territory should not be held in permanent subjection as colonies but should be

Having thus prepared a scheme of territorial government, Congress in the Ordinance of 1785 provided a system of land survey and sale. The land to the north of the Ohio was to be surveyed and marked off in a rectangular pattern before any of it was sold. This program derived from the practice of New England towns rather than from that of the South, where the settler located a choice plot and afterward determined its boundaries, usually following topographical irregularities. The land ordinance of Congress provided for east-west base lines, north-south "ranges," and townships with sides paralleling the ranges and base lines. Each township was to contain thirty-six square-mile sections. In every township four sections were to be set aside for the United States and one for a public school. The rest of the sections were to be sold at auction for not less than \$1 an acre. Since there were 640 acres in a section, the prospective buyer of government land had to have at least \$640 in ready cash or in United States certificates of indebtedness.

These terms favored the large speculators too much and the ordinary frontiersman too little to suit Jefferson, who believed that the West ought to belong to actual settlers on the ground. But the large speculators desired still further advantages, and Congress, in a hurry to realize returns from its domain, soon gave in to lobbying groups composed of some of its own members and various former army officers. To the Ohio and Scioto companies and the associates of John Cleves Symmes, Congress disposed of several million acres at only a few cents an acre. Millions of acres besides had been reserved at the time of cession by Virginia and Connecticut as bounty lands for their Revolutionary soldiers. Thus, before the government surveys had been well started, most of the



### Land Survey: Ordinance of 1785

## The Northwest Ordinance [1787]

1 Congress shall appoint a governor, a secretary, and three judges for the Northwest Territory. These officials shall adopt suitable laws from the original states. When the territory has "five thousand free male inhabitants of full age," they shall be allowed to elect representatives. These, together with the governor and a legislative council of five, shall form a general assembly to make laws for the territory.

2 The inhabitants shall be entitled to the benefits of trial by jury and other judicial proceedings according to the common law

3. "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged "

4 "There shall be formed in the said territory not less than three nor more than five States. And, whenever any of the said States shall have sixty thousand free inhabitants therein, such State shall be admitted, by its delegates, into the Congress of the United States, on an equal footing with the original States "

5 "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted "

choicest land north of the Ohio River was already spoken for (as was all the land south of the Ohio, to which the ordinances of Congress did not apply).

To protect their interests in the Northwest, the directors of the Ohio and Scioto companies demanded a territorial government that would give less influence to the inhabitants than would the one outlined in Jefferson's Ordinance of 1784, and the companies' skillful lobbyist Manasseh Cutler carried their case to Congress. Some of the congressmen themselves disliked Jefferson's idea of creating as many as ten new states north of the Ohio, since these states in time might gain political ascendancy. Soon Congress replaced the original law — which had never gone into actual effect — with the Ordinance of 1787. This famous "Northwest Ordinance" established one Northwest Territory for the time being, provided for its subsequent division into several territories, not fewer than three nor more than five, and laid out three stages for the evolution of each territory into a state. In the first stage, Congress-appointed officials would govern the territory, in the second an elected legislature would share power with them, and in the third, when the people numbered 60,000 or more, they might frame a constitution and apply for statehood. The Northwest Ordinance, em-

bodying as it did the views of conservative Easterners, failed to satisfy the restless inhabitants of the Ohio country.

The Indian policy of Congress fell short of the requirements of land speculators as well as of frontier settlers. In 1785 and 1786 congressional commissioners made treaties with representatives of the Iroquois and other tribes, who thereby surrendered their claims to a stretch of land north of the Ohio in return for comparatively worthless trinkets. Repudiating the treaties, many of the tribesmen went on the warpath. Congress vainly instructed Colonel Josiah Harmar, commanding the federal troops in the Ohio country, to drive the Indians back, then in desperation called upon the aging hero George Rogers Clark to save the frontier. While the campaign against the Indians in the Northwest faltered, a new threat arose in the Southwest, where the Creeks under the half-breed Alexander McGillivray not only repudiated their treaties ceding land but also formed an alliance with the Spaniards to resist the advance of American frontiersmen.

Some of the frontier leaders in the Southwest, instead of fighting the Spaniards, turned to collaborating with them. These leaders and their followers thought for a time that they saw advantages for themselves in the possible creation of a Southwestern confederacy under

Spanish tutelage. They might thus get what the United States seemed unable to give them—protection from the Indians, cheap or free land, and an outlet to Eastern and foreign markets through the navigation of the Mississippi. After the collapse of the Jay-Gardoqui negotiations, the “Spanish Conspiracy” began to hum, attracting not only unscrupulous adventurers like General James Wilkinson but also such prominent politicians as William Blount of Kentucky and John Sevier of Tennessee. At the same time another underground separatist movement was afoot on the far northern frontier. The aspirations of Vermont for statehood having been frustrated by the rival claims of New York and New Hampshire to its soil, the Allen brothers intrigued with British agents for returning the Green Mountain country to the British Empire.

#### DEBTS, TAXES, AND DANIEL SHAYS

At the end of the war foreign ships crowded into American seaports with cargoes of all kinds, and the American people bought extravagantly with cash or credit. In consequence the wartime accumulations of specie were drained out of the country, consumer indebtedness to importing merchants was multiplied, and a postwar depression lasting from 1784 to 1787 was made worse than it might otherwise have been. The depression, with its money scarcity, bore heavily upon debtors both public and private, complicating the financial problems of many citizens and of the Confederation and state governments.

The Confederation government had canceled most of its war debt to Americans by repudiating hundreds of millions of dollars in Continental currency. Yet it still owed a domestic debt estimated at about \$34 million in 1783; and through continued borrowings from abroad, mostly from the Netherlands, its foreign debt increased to more than \$10 million by 1788. During the 1780s the government had to make do with uncertain and fluctuating revenues. It could only make requisitions on the states; it never got around to assessing the real property in the states but merely estimated the proper quota for each of them to contribute. Often the states complained of unfairness and refused to comply; as a whole, they paid an

average of only about one-sixth of the total that was requested. This was barely enough to meet the government's ordinary operating expenses. To pay the interest on the foreign debt, the Secretary of the Treasury, Robert Morris, used the proceeds from the new loans. Thus he maintained an excellent credit rating with Dutch and other foreign bankers. But he could not keep up with the domestic obligations, and the government lost credit at home. At a fraction of the face value, shrewd speculators bought up Confederation certificates of indebtedness from former Revolutionary soldiers and others who lost hope of payment from Congress and who needed ready cash.

The states, too, came out of the war with large debts, and one by one they added to their obligations by taking over parts of the Confederation debt owed to their respective citizens. Taxable resources varied a good deal from state to state. The chief reliance everywhere was upon the direct tax on land and its improvements, the income tax then being exceptional, though Maryland had one. The states supplemented their revenues by means of customs duties and harbor fees, though these tariff and navigation laws served also to protect the states' manufacturers and shippers from foreign competition. To some extent the tariffs interfered with trade between states, but with a few exceptions they were designed to limit importations of foreign and not American goods.

Suffering seriously from the postwar deflation and from the tax burden upon their land, the debtor farmers of the country demanded relief in the form of paper money, and seven of the states responded by issuing such currency. Of these seven, Rhode Island went to the greatest extremes, not only designating its paper as legal tender but compelling creditors to accept it or lose the right to collect their debts. While creditors fled from debtors eager to pay in Rhode Island currency, the highest court in the state, in the case of *Trevett v. Weeden* (1786), held that the monetary legislation was unconstitutional, and the legislature summoned the judges before it and censured them for their action.

The other six states refused to yield to the advocates of inflation and pursued policies of unrelieved taxation to support their public debts. To the state creditors—that is, the bond-

holders—all this was sound and honest public finance. But it seemed like robbery and tyranny to many of the poverty-stricken farmers, especially in New England, who felt that money was being extorted from them to swell the riches of the wealthy bondholders in Boston and other towns. At a time when cash was not to be had, these farmers were called upon to pay in specie not only state tax collectors but also mortgage holders and other private creditors. Debtors who failed to pay found their mortgages foreclosed and property seized, and sometimes they found themselves in jail.

Mobs of distressed farmers rioted in various parts of New England but caused the most serious trouble in Massachusetts. There the malcontents of the Connecticut Valley and the Berkshire Hills, many of them Revolutionary veterans, found a leader in Daniel Shays, himself a former captain in the Continental army. Organizing and drilling his followers, Shays put forth a program of demands including paper money, tax relief, a moratorium on debts, the removal of the state capital from Boston to the interior, and the abolition of imprisonment for debt. During the summer of 1786 the Shaysites concentrated upon the immediate task of pre-

venting the collection of debts, private or public, and went in armed bands from place to place to break up court sittings and sheriff's sales. In Boston, members of the legislature, including Samuel Adams, denounced Shays and his men as rebels and traitors. When winter came these rebels, instead of laying down their arms, advanced upon Springfield to get more of them from the arsenal there. From Boston approached an army of state militiamen financed by a loan from wealthy merchants who feared a new revolution. In January 1787, this army met the ragged troops of Shays, killed several of them, captured many more, and scattered the rest to the hills in a blinding snowstorm.

As a military enterprise, Shays' Rebellion was a fiasco, yet it had important consequences for the future of the United States. In Massachusetts it resulted in a few immediate gains for the discontented groups. Shays and his lieutenants, at first sentenced to death, were soon pardoned, and some concessions to Shays' earlier demands were granted in the way of tax relief and the postponement of debt payments. Far more significant, the rebellion also affected the country as a whole by giving added urgency to the movement for a new Constitution.

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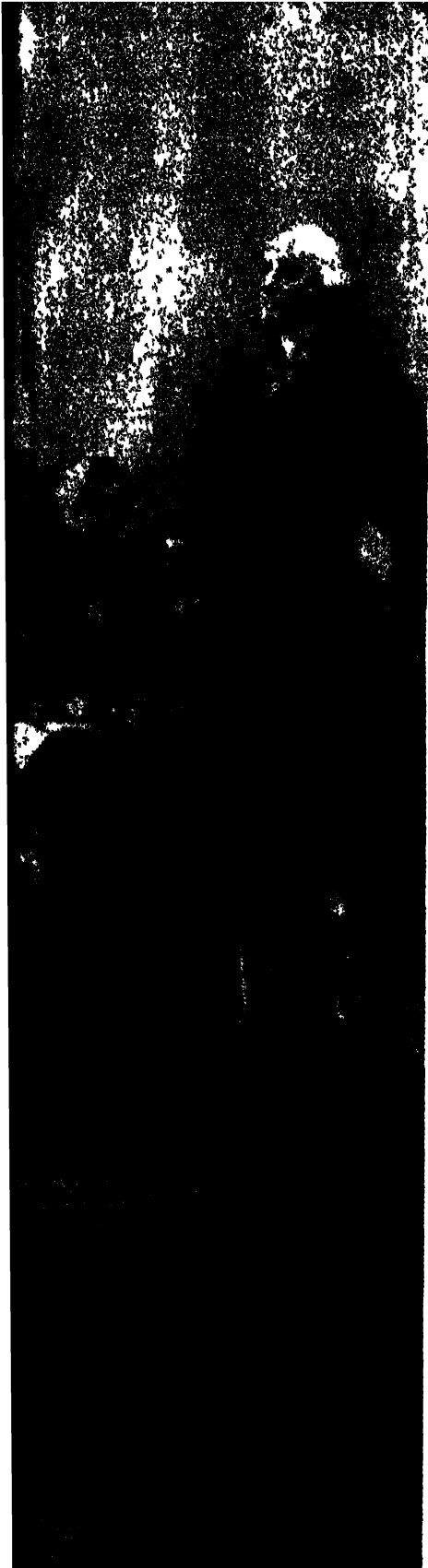
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# Beginnings Under the Constitution





## Six

William E. Gladstone, a nineteenth-century British statesman, once described the Constitution of the United States as the "most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." Of course, the Constitution was not the result of a sudden stroke of genius. It was the product of years of experience with colonial and state governments and with the Articles of Confederation. It took form in the heat of political controversy and was adopted in the face of bitter opposition. Yet, though far from flawless, it was indeed a wonderful work. Certainly it created, as it was intended to do, a "more perfect union" than existed at the time it was written. More than that, it provided a fundamental law capable of growth and adaptation to meet the needs of the nation for centuries to come.

From the beginning the Constitution took on some of the characteristics of a sacred writing, a holy mystery of the Americans. Among its virtues was its brevity (only about 7,000 words), but the defect of that virtue was a considerable ambiguity, which left room at certain points for a variety of interpretations. Political differences, no matter what the interests that underlay them, came to be expressed in constitutional terms. In discussing a governmental policy, men asked not only whether it was to their particular advantage, or whether it contributed to the public good, but also whether it was in accord with the Constitution. Those who had opposed the adoption of the Constitution joined the discussion instead of advocating repeal. All were willing to obey the fundamental law, but not all agreed on just what it permitted them to do.

Two basic lines of interpretation quickly appeared. According to one of them, the words of the document were to be liberally construed, so as to give the new government "implied powers" beyond those literally specified. According to the other line of interpretation, the words were to be strictly followed, so as to leave to the states all powers not plainly delegated to the new

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### The Constitutional Convention

While the presiding officer, George Washington, stands at the desk, delegates to the convention sign the final draft of the Constitution in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, late in the summer of 1787. This painting, done much later, is by Howard Chandler Christy, a popular illustrator of the twentieth century (Library of Congress).

government Alexander Hamilton was the first great exponent of liberal or loose construction, and Thomas Jefferson of strict construction and state rights.

It has been said that the shadows of Hamilton and Jefferson fall across the whole of subsequent American history, that to this day all Americans are either Hamiltonians or Jeffersonians. This is an oversimplification. Hamilton and Jefferson and their respective

followers disagreed on other things besides the reading of the Constitution, and even on that subject their views changed before long. It would be nearer the truth to say that, over the years, the people in whichever party happened to be in control of the federal government have wished to use its powers to achieve their aims and hence have favored a liberal construction. To oppose those aims the people out of power have resorted to the doctrine of state rights.

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## **Toward a New Government**

During the 1780s the Confederation Congress steadily lost prestige while leading a rather waflike existence. Its members timidly withdrew from Philadelphia in 1783 to escape the clamor of army veterans demanding back pay. After taking refuge for a while in Princeton, the delegates moved on to Annapolis and then to New York (1785), which for the time being remained the capital. With some difficulty a quorum had been rounded up to ratify the treaty ending the Revolutionary War. Only eighteen members, representing eight of the states, were on hand to pass the Northwest Ordinance.

### **ADVOCATES OF CENTRALIZATION**

Weak though the Confederation government was, it satisfied a great many—probably a majority—of the people. They did not want a strong central government. Having just fought the Revolutionary War to avert the danger of remote and, to them, tyrannical authority, they desired to keep the centers of political power close to home in the thirteen states.

Others, however, either disliked the Articles of Confederation from the outset or came eventually to desire something different. Disgruntled at the refusal of Congress to grant them half pay for life, some of the military men through their exclusive and hereditary Society of the Cincinnati hoped to control and to invigorate the government, some of them even as-

piring to a kind of army dictatorship. Artisans or "mechanics," the manufacturers of the time, preferred a uniformly high national tariff to the varying state tariffs. Merchants and shippers preferred a single and effective commercial policy to thirteen different and ineffective ones. Land speculators wished to see the "Indian menace" finally removed from their Western tracts, and creditors desired to stop the state issues of paper money. Investors in Confederation securities hoped to have the Confederation debt made good and the value of their securities enhanced. Large property owners in general looked for a reliable means of safety from the threat of mobs.

The issue was not whether the Confederation should be changed but how drastic the changes should be. Even its defenders reluctantly came to agree that the government needed strengthening at its weakest point—its lack of power to tax. To save the Articles of Confederation, its friends backed the impost amendment of 1782, which would have authorized Congress to levy customs duties. All the states ratified the amendment except Rhode Island, whose single veto was enough to kill it. The next year a similar amendment was accepted by Rhode Island but defeated by New York. Later the state-rights advocates proposed that the states make to Congress a temporary and qualified grant of taxing authority (not an amendment to the Articles), but most of the centralizers had begun to lose interest in such remedies. They insisted upon a much more thoroughgoing change.

## WHERE HISTORIANS DISAGREE

# Background of the Constitution

The 1780s once seemed to historians like a “critical period,” one of impending collapse and chaos from which the newly independent republic was rescued only by the timely adoption of the Constitution. This was the theme of a widely read book that John Fiske, a popularizer of both science and history, wrote a century afterward (1888). Fiske and other writers emphasized the difficulties and failures of the 1780s—the business depression, the weaknesses of the central government under the Articles of Confederation, the threats to American territory from Great Britain and Spain, the debts of the Confederation and of the states, the interstate jealousies and barriers to trade, the widespread resort to paper-money inflation, and the disorders and lawlessness culminating in Shays’ Rebellion. All this, according to Fiske and those who followed him, represented the darkness before the dawn. The dawn supposedly came with the establishment of the new government under the Constitution, when conditions suddenly began to improve.

One of the greatest of American historians, Charles A. Beard, challenged the prevailing view in an arresting and controversial work, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* (1913). Beard maintained that the 1780s had been a “critical period” only for certain business interests, not for the people as a whole. According to him, these interests desired a central government strong enough to promote industry and trade, safeguard private property, and make good the public debt. Many of the delegates to the constitutional convention, he said, stood to gain directly as well as indirectly from their efforts, for they had bought up the Confederation’s “certificates of indebtedness” cheaply, and these would rise in value if a strong central government were set up. He added that the advocates of the Constitution succeeded in obtaining its ratification despite the indifference or opposition of a majority of the people. In a later book (1927) Beard suggested that the Articles of Confederation might still be serving quite satisfactorily as our twentieth-century frame of government if a comparatively small group of impatient and determined men had not managed to bring about a drastic change in 1787–1788.

Most historians promptly adopted Beard’s conclusions, and some proceeded to elaborate upon his work. Merrill Jensen, for one, in *The Articles of Confederation* (1910) and *The New Nation* (1950), produced additional evidence to show that the 1780s were a time of hopeful striving rather than black despair, of economic recovery and not persisting depression, of governmental progress under the Articles despite temporary failures. Other historians disagreed with Beard, however, and in recent years the dissenters, notably Robert E. Brown and Forrest McDonald, have criticized his methods and findings with increasing effectiveness. Today, few if any historians accept the Beard thesis without qualification.

## **The Virginia Plan [1787]**

The following branches of government were recommended in the Virginia Plan.

1. A "National Legislature," with the states represented in proportion either to their "quotas of contribution" or to "the number of free inhabitants." Two branches, the members of the first to be elected by the people, the members of the second to be nominated by the state legislatures and elected by the first. Powers: To "legislate in all cases to which the separate states are incompetent," to "negative all laws passed by the several states, contravening in the opinion of the National Legislature the articles of Union," and to use force against recalcitrant states.

2. A single "National Executive" to be chosen by the National Legislature.

3. A "National Judiciary" to be chosen by the National Legislature.

4. A "Council of Revision," consisting of the National Executive and part of the National Judiciary, with power to "examine" and reject state and national laws before they went into effect.

The most resourceful of the reformers was the political genius, New York lawyer, one-time military aide to General Washington, and illegitimate son of a Scottish merchant in the West Indies—Alexander Hamilton. From the beginning he had been dissatisfied with the Articles of Confederation, had seen little to be gained by piecemeal amendments, and had urged the holding of a national convention to overhaul the entire document. To this end he took advantage of a movement for interstate cooperation that began in 1785 when a group of Marylanders and Virginians met in Alexandria to settle differences between the two states.

One of the Virginians, James Madison, who was as eager as Hamilton to see a stronger government, induced the Virginia legislature to invite all the states to send delegates to a larger conference on commercial questions. This group met at Annapolis in 1786, but representatives from only five states appeared at the meeting. Hamilton, a delegate from New York, took satisfaction in seeing the conference adopt his report and send copies to the state legislatures and to Congress. His report recommended that Congress call a convention of special delegates from all the states to gather in Philadelphia the next year and consider ways to "render the constitution of the Federal government adequate to the exigencies of the union."

At the moment, in 1786, there seemed little

possibility that the Philadelphia convention would be any better attended or would accomplish any more than the previous meeting at Annapolis. The leadership of Washington would be essential for success. One of the wealthiest men in the country, but temporarily short of cash, Washington doubted whether he would undertake the trouble and expense of a trip to Philadelphia.

Then, early in 1787, the news of commotion and bloodshed in Massachusetts spread throughout the country and the world, news which seemed to foretell other and more dangerous insurrections than that of Shays. In Paris the American minister, Thomas Jefferson, was not alarmed. "I hold," he confided in a letter to his Virginia friend James Madison, "that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical." At Mount Vernon, however, Washington did not take the news so calmly. "There are combustibles in every State which a spark might set fire to," he exclaimed. "I feel infinitely more than I can express for the disorders which have arisen. Good God!" Washington refused to listen to renewed suggestions that he make himself a military dictator, but after Congress had issued its call for a constitutional convention he borrowed money for the journey and, in May, left Mount Vernon for Philadelphia.

## **The New Jersey Plan [1787]**

The main features of the New Jersey Plan were:

1. The continuance of the existing one-house Congress, with one vote for each state but with the following additional powers: to raise a revenue from import duties, stamp taxes, and postage; to regulate interstate and foreign commerce, and to provide for the collection of taxes within any state failing to pay its share of the requisitions upon the states.
  2. A plural "Federal Executive" to be elected by Congress.
  3. A "Federal Judiciary" to be appointed by the Executive.
  4. The establishment of acts of Congress and federal treaties as the "supreme law" of the states, and the authorization of the Federal Executive to "call forth the power of the Confederate States . . . to enforce and compel an obedience"
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## **A DIVIDED CONVENTION**

Fifty-five men, representing all the states except Rhode Island, attended one or more sessions of the convention that sat in the Philadelphia State House from May to September, 1787. Never before or since has there been a more distinguished gathering in America. These "Founding Fathers," instead of being graybearded ancients as the term implies, were on the whole relatively young men, many of them in their twenties and thirties and only one (Benjamin Franklin) extremely old; his eighty-one years raised the average age from forty-three to forty-four. Despite their comparative youth, the delegates were men of vast practical experience in business, plantation management, and politics; and they were well educated for their time, more than a third of them being college graduates. Practically all of them represented, both directly and indirectly, the great property interests of the country. Many feared what one of them called the "turbulence and follies" of democracy.

Most of the constitution makers agreed that the United States needed a stronger central government. There were differences of opinion, however, as to how much stronger the government should be, what specific powers it should have, and what structure it should be given. There were differences, in particular, over the relative influence the large and small states should exert in the new system, and over the provisions to be included for the protection and promotion of economic interests in different sections of the country.

Among the states, Virginia was then much the largest in population—more than twice as large as New York, more than four times as large as New Jersey, more than ten times as large as Delaware. Among the delegations at Philadelphia, the Virginians were also the best prepared for the work of the convention. And among the Virginians, James Madison (aged thirty-six) was the intellectual leader. Already, before the convention met, he had done his homework well, having devised in some detail a plan for a new "national" government. The Virginians took the initiative from the moment the convention began.

Washington was easily elected to preside, and then a resolution was passed to keep the proceedings absolutely secret. Next, Edmund Randolph of Virginia proposed that "a *national* government ought to be established, consisting of a *supreme* Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary." This being approved, Randolph introduced the plan that Madison already had worked out. The Virginia Plan, if adopted, would give the larger influence to the richer and more populous states. It would also mean abandoning the Articles of Confederation and building the government anew.

But the existing Congress had called the convention "for the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation," and the states in commissioning their "deputies" had authorized them to do no more than revise the Articles. Some of the delegates—especially those from the smaller states—now raised doubts whether the convention properly could entertain such proposals as were embodied in

the Virginia Plan. At first, however, these men had nothing to offer in its stead. After some delay, William Paterson of New Jersey submitted an alternative scheme for a "federal" as opposed to a "national" government. The New Jersey Plan was intended only to revise and strengthen the Articles.

The stage was now set for a full debate between large-state and small-state delegates—between advocates of a national system (nationalists) and of a federal system (federalists). The Virginia Plan went much too far to suit the federalists. To them, one of its worst features was the system of representation in the proposed two-house legislature. In the lower house, if the states were to be represented in proportion to their population, the largest state (Virginia) would have about ten times as many representatives as the smallest (Delaware). In the upper house, if its members were to be elected by the lower house, some of the smaller states at any given time might have no members at all! To the small-state delegates the Congress of the Articles of Confederation, as well as the Congress of the New Jersey Plan, at least had the merit of equal representation for all the states, regardless of size. But the New Jersey Plan gained the support of only a minority in the convention and, after much argument, was tabled.

The Virginia Plan was left as the basis for discussion. Its proponents realized that they would have to make concessions to the small-state men if the convention were ever to reach a general agreement. The majority soon conceded an important point by consenting that the members of the upper house should be elected by the state legislatures rather than by the lower house of the national legislature. Thus each state would be sure of always having at least one member in the upper house, but there remained the question of how many members each state should have.

There remained also the question of the number of representatives each state should have in the lower house. If the number was to depend upon population, were slaves to be included in the population figure? The delegates from the states where slavery seemed a permanent institution—especially those from South Carolina—insisted that slaves should be counted as persons (though not, of course, entitled to vote) in determining a state's representation. But these delegates argued that slaves ought to

be considered as property, not as persons, when it was proposed that the new legislature be allowed to levy a direct tax (such as a land or poll tax) upon each state in proportion to its population. Men who came from states where slavery had disappeared or was expected to disappear argued that slaves should be included in calculating taxation but not representation. Thus an issue between slave and free states was added to the one between large and small states.

### **DIFFERENCES COMPROMISED**

On these and other matters, the delegates bickered day after day. By the end of June, as both temperature and tempers rose to uncomfortable heights, the convention seemed in danger of breaking up, with nothing accomplished. If this should happen, the men at Philadelphia would "become a reproach and by-word down to future ages," said the venerable Franklin, the voice of calmness and conciliation throughout the summer. "And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing governments by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war and conquest."

Through the calming influence of Franklin and others, especially Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, the delegates managed to settle the most serious of their disputes and go on with their work. A committee of twelve, with one member from each state, brought in a report that culminated in what afterwards was known as the "Great Compromise" (adopted on July 16, 1787). One part of this report provided that the states should be represented in the lower house in proportion to their population, and that three-fifths of the slaves should be included in determining the basis for both representation and direct taxation. The three-fifths formula, though seemingly rather arbitrary, gained some degree of logic from the assumption that, in contributing his labor to the wealth of a state, a slave was on the average three-fifths as productive as a freeman. Another part of the Great Compromise provided that in the upper house, the states should be represented equally with two members apiece.

In the ensuing weeks, while committees busied themselves with various parts of the document that was beginning to take shape,



the convention as a whole effected another compromise, this one having to do with the legislative power to impose tariffs and regulate commerce. The men from some of the Southern states feared that this power might be used for levying export duties on their crops, interfering with the slave trade, and making commercial agreements (as in the recent Jay-Gardoqui treaty) which would sacrifice the interests of rice and tobacco growers. The South Carolinians proposed that a two-thirds vote in the legislature be required not only to approve commercial treaties but also to pass commercial laws. Though not accepting that proposal, the convention made concessions by forbidding the legislature to levy a tax on exports, to put a duty of more than ten dollars a head on imported slaves, or to prohibit slave importations until twenty years had elapsed.

Some differences of opinion the convention was unable to harmonize, and it disposed of them by evasion or omission. One of these concerned the question whether the new courts or some special agency should be empowered to review legislative acts and set them aside. The "council of revision," a part of the original Virginia Plan, was dropped, and no provision was added to confer the power of judicial review explicitly upon the courts.

The Constitution, as it finally took form at the end of summer in 1787, though an outgrowth of the Virginia Plan, was in some respects so different that Randolph himself refused to sign it. Yet it differed even more from the New Jersey Plan, and several refused on that account to give it their approval. Indeed, the completed document did not entirely satisfy any of the delegates. Nevertheless, thirty-nine of them affixed their signatures to it, doubtless with much the same feeling that Franklin expressed. "Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution," he said, "*because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best.*"

### THE CONSTITUTION OF 1787

Madison, who was responsible for most of the actual drafting, observed that it was, "in strictness, neither a national nor a federal Constitution, but a composition of both."

Certainly it possessed some strongly national features. The Constitution and all laws and treaties made under it were to be the

"supreme law" of the land, regardless of anything to the contrary in the constitution or laws of any state. Broad powers were granted to the central government, including the congressional powers of taxation, regulation of commerce, control of money, and the passage of laws "necessary and proper" for carrying out its specific powers. At the same time, the states were deprived of a number of the powers—such as the issuance of money and the passage of laws "impairing the obligation of contracts," for example, laws postponing the payment of debts—which they had been free to exercise under the Articles of Confederation. Now all state officials were to be required to take an oath of allegiance to the Constitution, and the state militias were to be made available, upon call, for enforcing the new "supreme law." Nowhere were the former claims of the states to individual sovereignty recognized. Gone was the stipulation of the Articles that "each State shall retain every power, jurisdiction, and right not expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled." Lacking was any bill of rights to limit the central government as the state bills limited the state governments.

On the other hand, the Constitution was federal in setting up a government that presupposed the existence of separate states and left wide powers to them. For instance, the states were to be represented as separate and equal entities in one of the two branches of the new legislature.

Within the allotted sphere of its powers, the new government was authorized to act directly upon the people of the United States. It would not have to act upon them solely through the member states, as the previous Confederation government, and indeed all confederation governments of the past, had done. Here, then, was something new and unique, something for which old terms were hardly adequate. It was a combination of two kinds of government, state and central, with each of them intended to be supreme within its respective sphere.

Next to the distinctive federal arrangement (the "division of powers"), the most striking feature of the new system was the complex organization and operation of the central government itself, with its checks and balances among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches (the "separation of powers"). There was the new Congress, with its two chambers, the Senate and the House of Representatives,

each of the two with members elected in a different way and for different terms, and each checking the other, since both must agree before any law could be passed. There was the single executive, the President, who was to be chosen in a roundabout way, by special electors who themselves were to be chosen in whatever way the separate states might designate. The electors, meeting in isolated groups, state by state, were to cast their ballots as they saw fit, and if any man should receive a majority of the electoral votes, he would be President. It was assumed, however, that usually no man would get a majority, and then the final selection among the leading candidates would be up to the House of Representatives. Thus the election of a President would be far removed from the mass of the people. Yet the President, in addition to other powers, would have the power of vetoing acts of Congress. There was also the Supreme Court, which was still further re-

moved from the ordinary voters since the President with the consent of the Senate was to appoint the judges for life. And while nothing was said in the Constitution itself about the power of reviewing and disallowing presidential actions or congressional acts, the Supreme Court could be expected to have some authority over them.

This complicated structure resulted from accident—that is, from the compromising of contradictory views—as much as from deliberate planning. Nevertheless, the complexity was such as to give the Founding Fathers hope that no single group or combination of groups in the country could ever gain absolute and unchecked power. A government so divided against itself ought to frustrate tyranny from whatever source. When the Founding Fathers spoke of tyranny, they usually had in mind the rule of mobs and demagogues—the threat of such leaders as Daniel Shays.

## Adoption and Adaptation
















Since the delegates at Philadelphia had exceeded their instructions from Congress and the states, they had reason to doubt whether the Constitution would ever be ratified if they followed the procedures laid down in the Articles of Confederation, which required *all* of the state legislatures to approve alterations in the form of the government. So the convention changed the rules, specifying in the Constitution that the new government should go into effect among the ratifying states when only *nine* of the thirteen had ratified, and recommending to Congress that the Constitution be submitted to specially called state *conventions* rather than to the legislatures of the states.

### "FEDERALISTS," "ANTIFEDERALISTS"

The Congress in New York, completely overshadowed by the convention in Philadelphia, accepted the latter's work and submitted it to the states for their approval or disapproval. The state legislatures, again with the exception of Rhode Island, arranged for the election of delegates to ratifying conventions, and sooner

or later each of these conventions got down to business. Meanwhile, from the fall of 1787 to the summer of 1788, the merits and demerits of the new Constitution were debated in the legislatures, in mass meetings, and in the columns of newspapers, as well as in the convention halls. For the most part the struggle, though intense, was peaceful and deliberative, yet the opposing factions sometimes came to blows, and death and injury resulted in at least one place (Albany, New York).

Despite the reference of its preamble to "We the people," the Constitution was not in literal fact ordained and established by the whole people of the United States. As is shown by the elections for the state conventions, something like three-fourths of the adult white males in the country as a whole failed to vote for delegates, mainly because of indifference, and therefore exercised no real influence upon the outcome. Of those who did vote, a large majority favored ratification. The voters, however, did not have a clear-cut choice between a "federal" and a "national" government. The issues were confused, both because of the "mixed" character of the Constitution itself and because of the

Ratification of the Constitution	
State	First Vote in Ratification Convention
Delaware December 1787	
Pennsylvania December 1787	
New Jersey December 1787	
Georgia January 1788	
Connecticut January 1788	
Massachusetts February 1788	
Maryland April 1788	
South Carolina May 1788	
New Hampshire June 1788	
Virginia June 1788	
New York July 1788	
North Carolina November 1789	
Rhode Island May 1790	
<div>For </div> <div>Against </div>	
* Date of Final Ratification Appears Under State Name	

*The Constitution was promptly and overwhelmingly approved by the ratifying conventions of some of the smaller states, such as Delaware, New Jersey, and Georgia. But it barely got by in the large states of Massachusetts, Virginia, and New York. It was approved by North Carolina and Rhode Island only after it had already gone into effect. The conventions in these two states waited until they were sure a bill of rights would be added.*

terminology that was employed in the ratification debates. Since the idea of a strongly national government was thought to be unpopular, the advocates of the new Constitution chose to call themselves "Federalists" and to call their opponents "Antifederalists." These misnomers stuck, despite the insistence of opponents of ratification that they were "Federal Republicans," the true federalists of the time.

The friends of the Constitution had a number of advantages. They possessed a positive

program and an appealing name, while the Antifederalists by that very word were made to stand for nothing constructive, for chaos itself. The Federalists were the better-organized group and had the weight of fame and superior leadership on their side. They could point to the support of the two most eminent men in America, Franklin and Washington. And Washington himself declared that the choice lay between the Constitution and disunion. The Federalists also included some of the most profound political philosophers of any period or place in Hamilton, Madison, and Jay, who under the joint pseudonym "Publius" wrote a long series of newspaper essays expounding the meaning and virtues of the Constitution. Afterwards published in book form as *The Federalist*, these papers have been considered as the most authoritative of all constitutional commentaries and, indeed, as one of the greatest of all treatises on political science.

The opponents of ratification produced no comparable set of Antifederalist papers, yet these men too were able and sincere and they made a vigorous case for themselves in their own speeches and newspaper propaganda. Necessarily, the Antifederalists resorted mainly to negative argument. The Constitution, they protested, was illegal—as indeed it was if judged by the Articles of Confederation, the existing fundamental law. The new government would increase taxes, obliterate the states, wield dictatorial powers, favor the "well-born" over the common people, and put an end to individual liberty, the Antifederalists added. Of all their specific criticisms the most compelling was this: the Constitution lacked a bill of rights.

For all the efforts of the Antifederalists, ratification proceeded during the winter of 1787–1788. Delaware, the first to act, did so unanimously, as did two others of the smallest states, New Jersey and Georgia. In the large states of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts the Antifederalists put up a determined struggle but lost in the final vote. By June 1788, when the New Hampshire convention at last made up its mind, nine of the states had ratified and thus had made it possible for the Constitution to go into effect among themselves.

A new government could hardly hope to succeed, however, without the participation of Virginia and New York, whose conventions

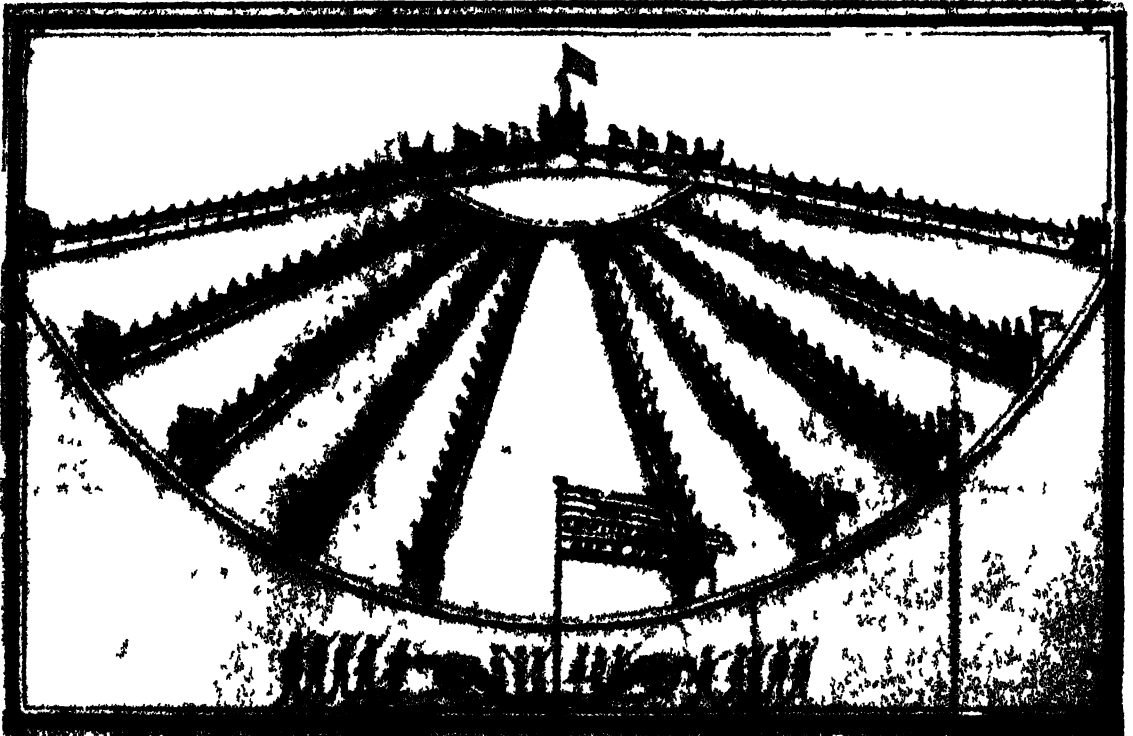
remained closely divided. Before the end of the month Virginia and then New York consented to the Constitution by rather narrow votes. The New York convention yielded to expediency—even some of the most staunchly Antifederalist delegates feared that the state's commercial interests would suffer if, once the other states had got together under the "New Roof," New York were to remain outside. Massachusetts, Virginia, and New York all ratified on the assumption, though not on the express condition, that certain desired amendments would be added to the Constitution, above all a bill of rights. Deciding to wait and see what became of these hopes for amendment, the North Carolina convention adjourned without taking action. Rhode Island, for the time being, did not even call a convention to consider ratification.

### FILLING IN THE GAPS

When the first elections under the Constitution were held, in the early months of 1789, the results showed that the new government was to be in the hands of its friends. Few if any of the newly elected congressmen and senators had been extreme Antifederalists, almost all had favored ratification, and many had served as delegates to the Philadelphia convention. The President-elect, George Washington, had presided at the convention, many who had favored ratification did so because they expected him to preside over the new government also. He received the votes of all the presidential electors whom the states, either by legislative action or by popular election, had named. John Adams, a firm Federalist, though not a member of the

#### Ratification Banquet, New York

*The New York convention ratified the Constitution on July 26, 1788. Three days earlier, confident that the convention was going to act favorably, six thousand citizens of New York City gathered to celebrate. After parades, they took their places in a gigantic pavilion to feast and to listen to speeches. From a contemporary drawing. (Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society, New York City)*



convention, received the next highest number of electoral votes and hence was to be Vice President.

For the time being the seat of government was to continue to be the city of New York, and thus the sensibilities of the geographical sections were neatly balanced, the President being from the South, the Vice President from New England, and the capital in one of the middle states. Congressmen were so slow to reach New York that not until April was a quorum on hand to make an official count of the electoral vote and send a messenger to notify General Washington of his election. After a journey from Mount Vernon marked by elaborate celebrations along the way, Washington was inaugurated on April 30.

The responsibilities facing the first President and the first Congress were in some ways greater than those facing any President or Congress to follow. Though these men of 1789 had the Constitution as a guide, that document provided only a general plan that had yet to be applied to specific situations as they arose. It left many questions unanswered. What, for example, should be the rules of the two houses for the conduct of their business? What code of etiquette should govern the relations between the President on the one hand and Congress and the people on the other? Should he have some high-sounding title, such as "His Highness the President of the United States and Protector of Their Liberties"? (John Adams, who would probably have been horrified at the thought of a later Vice President being called "The Veep," thought both he and the President ought to have dignified forms of address.) What was the true meaning of various ambiguous phrases in the Constitution? In answering these and other questions, Washington and his colleagues knew they were setting precedents that, in many cases, would give lasting direction to the development of the Constitution in actual practice.

By filling certain gaps in the Constitution, the first Congress served almost as a continuation of the constitutional convention. The work of the convention had been incomplete in various respects, especially in that it had omitted a bill of rights. Dozens of amendments intended to make up for this lack had been proposed in the state ratifying conventions, and Congress now undertook the task of sorting these, reduc-

ing them to a manageable number, and sending them to the states for ratification. Of the twelve sent out, ten were ratified, and these took effect in 1791. The first nine of them limited Congress by forbidding it to infringe upon certain basic rights, such as freedom of religion, of speech, and of the press, immunity from arbitrary arrest, and trial by jury. The Tenth Amendment, reserving to the states all powers except those specifically withheld from them or delegated to the federal government, bolstered state rights and changed the emphasis of the Constitution from nationalism to federalism.

In regard to the structure of the federal courts, the Constitution had only this to say: "The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish." Thus the convention had left up to Congress the number of Supreme Court judges to be appointed and the kinds of lower courts to be organized. In the Judiciary Act of 1789 Congress provided for a Supreme Court of six members, with one chief justice and five associate justices; for thirteen district courts with one judge apiece; and for three circuit courts, each to consist of one of the district judges sitting with two of the Supreme Court justices. In the same act Congress gave the Supreme Court the power to make the final decision in cases involving the constitutionality of state laws. If the Constitution was in fact to be the "supreme law of the land," the various state courts could not be left to decide for themselves whether the state legislatures were violating that supreme law.

As for executive departments, the Constitution referred indirectly to them but did not specify what or how many they should be. The first Congress created three such departments—state, treasury, and war—and also the offices of attorney general and postmaster general.

In appointing department heads and other high officials, President Washington selected men who were qualified by character and experience, who were well disposed toward the Constitution (no Antifederalists) and who as a group would provide a balanced representation of the different sections of the country. To the office of secretary of the treasury he appointed Alexander Hamilton of New York, who had taken the lead in calling the constitutional

convention and who, though only thirty-two, was an expert in public finance. For secretary of war he chose the Massachusetts Federalist, General Henry Knox. As attorney general he named Edmund Randolph of Virginia, sponsor of the plan upon which the Constitution had been based. He picked as secretary of state another Virginian, Thomas Jefferson, who had not opposed the Constitution though he had had nothing to do with its framing or adoption, having been away from the country as minister to France.

From time to time Washington called upon these four men for advice, usually as individuals. They did not form a cabinet in the sense of a group of presidential counselors holding regular meetings (the cabinet in this sense began to develop during the presidency of Jefferson).

When Washington took office he supposed, as did many others, that the Senate would act for certain purposes as an advisory council, since according to the Constitution the Senate was to give its advice and consent for the appointment of high officials and for the ratification of treaties. With only twenty-two members in the beginning, the Senate was small enough so that Washington could expect to consult personally with it. He changed his mind, however, after taking a treaty draft to the senators for their advice. They demanded that he leave the document for them to inspect and change at their leisure, and he refused, resolving never again to submit a treaty to the senators until its negotiation had been completed. Thus he set a precedent in treaty making which for the most part his successors have followed.

## **Hamilton Against Jefferson**

During George Washington's first term he and his followers infused vigor into the government—the *national* government, as he always called it. As President, he thought it his duty to see that the laws of Congress, if constitutional, were faithfully carried out. A man of strong will, he was the master of his own administration, but (unlike later Presidents such as Andrew Jackson and Franklin D. Roosevelt) he did not conceive of himself as a popular leader who should find out the will of the people and then see that Congress enacted it into law. One of his department heads, Secretary of the Treasury Hamilton, provided the legislative leadership that Washington himself lacked. Hamilton exerted a greater positive influence than anyone else upon both domestic and foreign policies during Washington's presidency, continuing to be influential even after his resignation in 1794.

### **HAMILTON'S FINANCIAL PLANS**

Of all the leading men of his time, Hamilton was one of the most aristocratic in his personal tastes and in his political philosophy. He distrusted the common people. An admirer of the British political system, with its rule by King

and upper classes, he wished to adapt its principles as closely as he could to government in the United States. What the country most needed, he thought, was order and stability; the people already had enough liberty, indeed too much of it. He thought the new government could be strengthened and made to succeed if the support of the wealthy men of the country could be brought to it. And, believing that all men were motivated by self-interest, he assumed that the way to gain the support of the wealthy was to give them a stake in the success of the new government. He therefore planned a program of legislation that, among other things, was intended to cause the propertied classes to look to the federal government for profitable investments and for the protection and promotion of their property interests.

If men of means were to have faith in the government, then it must keep faith with them by paying its debts and establishing its credit on a sound basis. Therefore, first of all, Hamilton proposed that the existing public debt be "funded," or in other words that the miscellaneous, uncertain, depreciated certificates of indebtedness that the old Congress had issued during and since the Revolution be called in and exchanged for uniform, interest-bearing bonds, payable at definite dates. Next he rec-

commended that the Revolutionary state debts be "assumed" or taken over by the United States, his object being to cause the state as well as the federal bondholders to look to the central government for eventual payment. His plan was not to pay off and thus eliminate the debt, either state or federal, but just the opposite: to create a large and permanent public debt, new bonds being issued as old ones were paid off.

Hamilton also planned the establishment of a national bank. At the time, there were only a few banks in the country, located in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. A new, national bank would serve several purposes. It would aid business by providing loans and currency—in the form of bank notes, which in those days were used instead of checks. It would aid the government by making a safe place available for the deposit of federal funds, by facilitating the collection of taxes and the disbursement of the government's expenditures, and by keeping up the price of government bonds through judicious bond purchases. The kind of institution that Hamilton had in mind was to be "national" in the sense that it was to be chartered by the federal government, was to have a monopoly of the government's own banking business, and was to be government-controlled to some degree, one-fifth of the directors being appointed by the government.

The funding and assumption of the debts, together with the payment of regular interest on them, would cost a great deal of money, and so Hamilton had to find adequate sources of revenue. He thought the government should depend mainly upon two kinds of taxes (in addition to the receipts to be anticipated from the sales of public land). One of these was an excise to be paid by distillers of alcoholic liquors. This tax would hit most heavily the whiskey distillers of the back country, especially in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina. These were small farmers who converted part of their corn and rye crop into whiskey, so as to have a concentrated and valuable product that they could conveniently take to market by horseback or muleback over poor mountain roads.

The other tax upon which Hamilton relied was the tariff on imports. Such a tax would not only raise a revenue, but also protect and encourage American manufactures by raising the price of competing manufactured goods

brought in from abroad. In the old Articles of Confederation, according to its defenders as well as its critics, the worst defect had been Congress' lack of power to levy customs duties. One of the first acts of the new Congress, in 1789, was the passage of a tariff law designed to foster industries while raising a revenue, but the average level of duties under this law was extremely low. Hamilton advocated a higher and more decidedly protective tariff. In his Report on Manufactures he glowingly set forth the advantages, as he saw them, of stimulating the growth of industry in the United States. Factories, he said, would make the nation more nearly self-sufficient in wartime, would increase prosperity by creating a home market for the produce of the farms, and would make possible the fuller utilization of all kinds of labor, including the labor of women and children, even those (to quote Hamilton himself) of "tender years."

#### ENACTING THE PROGRAM

Between 1789 and 1792 Hamilton succeeded in persuading Congress to pass the necessary laws for erecting his financial system—but only after a bitter struggle with a rising opposition group.

As for the funding of the public debt, very few of the congressmen objected to the plan itself, for they agreed with Hamilton that the government must make its credit good. Many of them disagreed, however, with his proposal to fund the debt *at par*, that is, to exchange new bonds for old certificates of indebtedness on a dollar-for-dollar basis. These old certificates had been issued to merchants and farmers in payment for war supplies during the Revolution, or to officers and soldiers of the Revolutionary army in payment for their services. Many of these original holders had been forced to sell at a sacrifice during the hard times of the 1780s, to speculators who bought up the securities at a fraction of their face value.

Admitting that the government should arrange to pay every cent it owed, to *whom* should it arrange to pay? Many congressmen believed that the original holders deserved some consideration, and James Madison, now a representative from Virginia, argued for a plan by which the new bonds would be divided

## Constitutionality of the Bank: Jefferson

*The incorporation of a bank, and the powers assumed by this bill, have not, in my opinion, been delegated to the United States by the Constitution.*

*I. They are not among the powers specially enumerated. . . .*

*II. Nor are they within either of the general phrases, which are the two following:—*

*1. "To lay taxes to provide for the general welfare of the United States." . . . They [Congress] are not to do anything they please, to provide for the general welfare, but only to lay taxes for that purpose. . . . It was intended to lace them up straitly within the enumerated powers, and those without which, as means, these powers could not be carried into effect. . . .*

*2. The second general phrase is, "to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution the enumerated powers." But they can all be carried into execution without a bank. A bank, therefore, is not necessary, and consequently not authorized by this phrase.*

*It has been much urged that a bank will give great facility or convenience in the collection of taxes. Suppose this were true; yet the Constitution allows only the means which are "necessary," not those which are merely "convenient," for effecting the enumerated powers.*

between the original holders and the later purchasers. But the friends of Hamilton insisted that such a plan was impracticable and that the honor of the government required a literal fulfillment of its earlier promises to pay. Congress finally passed the funding bill in the form that Hamilton desired.

His assumption bill ran into even greater difficulty. Its opponents had a very good case, for if the federal government took over the state debts, the people of one state would have to pay federal taxes for servicing the debts of other states, and some of these debts, such as that of Massachusetts, were much larger than others, such as that of Virginia. Naturally, Virginians did not think it fair for them to have to pay a share of the large Massachusetts debt, and their representatives in Congress balked at the assumption bill.

Finally the bill got the support of some of them and so managed to pass, but only because of a logrolling deal. The Virginians wanted the national capital to be permanently located near them in the South. After Jefferson's return from France, Hamilton appealed to him, and Jefferson held a dinner at which arrangements were made to barter Virginia votes for the assumption bill in return for Northern votes for a Southern location of the capital. In 1790 the

capital was changed back to Philadelphia for a ten-year period, and after that a new capital city was to be built on the banks of the Potomac River, on land to be selected by Washington himself.

When Hamilton's bank bill was introduced into Congress, Madison and others opposed it on the grounds that it was unconstitutional, and though a majority voted for it, President Washington himself had his doubts. He therefore asked his official advisers for written opinions on the subject. In Hamilton's opinion the establishment of a bank was a fitting exercise of the powers of Congress, though the Constitution nowhere explicitly gave Congress the right. But Jefferson, with the support of his fellow-Virginian, Randolph, argued that the Constitution should be construed in a strict sense and that Congress should be allowed no powers not clearly given to it. Washington found Hamilton's case more convincing, and he signed the bank bill when it came to him. The Bank of the United States began operations in 1791, under a charter that granted it the right to continue in business for twenty years.

Hamilton also had his way with the excise tax, though after its passage the law was altered somewhat, in response to protests from farmers, so as to bear less heavily on the



## Constitutionality of the Bank: Hamilton

*It is conceded that implied powers are to be considered as delegated equally with express ones. Then it follows, that as a power of erecting a corporation may as well be implied as any other thing, it may as well be employed as an instrument or mean of carrying into execution any of the specified powers, as any other instrument or mean whatever. . . .*

*It is objected that none but necessary and proper means are to be employed; and the Secretary of State maintains that no means are to be considered as necessary but those without which the grant of the power would be nugatory. . . .*

*It is certain that neither the grammatical nor popular sense of the term requires that construction. According to both, necessary often means no more than needful, requisite, incidental, useful, or conducive to. . . .*

*If the end be clearly comprehended within any of the specified powers, and if the measure have an obvious relation to that end, and is not forbidden by any particular provision of the Constitution, it may safely be deemed to come within the compass of the national authority. . . .*

*A bank has a natural relation to the power of collecting taxes—to that of regulating trade—to that of providing for the common defence. . . .*

*[Therefore] the incorporation of a bank is a constitutional measure. . . .*

smaller distillers. He did not succeed in getting from Congress a tariff as highly protective as he had hoped for, yet the tariff law of 1792 did raise the rates somewhat.

Once enacted, Hamilton's program worked as he had intended. The public credit quickly was restored; the bonds of the United States were soon selling at home and abroad at prices even above their par value.

At the same time, speculators got rich and corruption was rife. Many congressmen had bought up large amounts of the old certificates of indebtedness, and these men profited by their own legislation in funding the debt at par. Directly or indirectly, properly or improperly, thousands of wealthy merchants in the seaports also gained from the Hamilton program.

The mass of the people—the farmers scattered over the countryside—profited much less. While these people shared some of the benefit of national strength and prosperity, they bore most of the burden of paying for it. The financial program required taxes, and these came mostly from the farmers, who had to pay not only land taxes to their state governments but also the excise and, indirectly, the tariff to the federal government. The feeling grew that the Washington administration was

not treating all the people fairly, and out of this feeling an organized political opposition arose.

## RISE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The Constitution made no reference to political parties, and the Founding Fathers, George Washington in particular, believed that such organizations were evil and should be avoided. Yet parties soon arose from a division between the followers of Hamilton and those of Madison and Jefferson.

Jefferson and Madison were such close collaborators that it is sometimes difficult to separate the contributions of the two. To describe the political philosophy of one is, in the main, to describe the political philosophy of both. Jefferson, himself a farmer, believed that farmers were God's chosen people and that an ideal republic would consist of sturdy citizens each tilling his own soil. Though an aristocrat by birth, his mother belonging to one of the first families of Virginia, the Randolphs, he had faith in the good intentions of such farmer-citizens and thought that, if properly educated, they could be trusted to govern themselves through the election of able and qualified men. But, in the 1790s, he feared city



### **Federal Hall, New York**

*Here George Washington was inaugurated as President on April 30, 1789, taking his oath of office on the balcony that overlooks Wall Street. The building was originally constructed as the City Hall in 1699–1700. It was extensively remodeled and enlarged after the Revolution and was renamed Federal Hall when it served as the temporary capitol of the United States, in 1789–1790. At the end of Wall Street is the Gothic-styled Trinity Church (Anglican). It was built in 1688, destroyed in a great fire following the British occupation of the city in 1776, and rebuilt in 1788. Behind the church was a meadow sloping down to the Hudson River. (Top left)*

### **The First Bank of the United States**

*The headquarters of the Bank of the United States, which was founded through Alexander Hamilton's efforts, were in Philadelphia. The bank building on Third Street was completed in 1795. It is a good example of Early Republican architecture with its rather boxlike shape, its balustrade along the roof edge, its quoins at the angle of the walls, and its Roman pediment and columns in front. From a drawing and engraving by W. Birch & Son of Philadelphia, published in 1799. (Bottom left)*

mobs as "sores upon the body politic." He then opposed the development of extensive manufactures because they would lead to the growth of cities packed with propertyless workers. While Hamilton emphasized the need for order and stability, Jefferson stressed the importance of individual freedom.

As a member of President Washington's official circle, Jefferson differed so strongly with his colleague Hamilton on particular issues such as the Bank that he soon offered to resign. But Washington preferred to keep both men in office to preserve national unity if possible. His became a coalition government, though he himself agreed more often with Hamilton than with Jefferson. The two secretaries continued to work against each other, and each began to organize a following in Congress and in the country at large. Hamilton's followers came to be known as Federalists, Jefferson's as Republicans.

The Federalists of the 1790s were not entirely the same men as the Federalists of 1787–1788 who had campaigned for the ratification of the Constitution, nor were the Republicans exactly the same men as the old Antifederalists. There were numerous exceptions, the most noteworthy being Madison, who had played a leading role at the constitutional convention and in the ratification effort, then had broken with Hamilton on the questions of funding and the Bank, and had become one of the founders of the Republican party. Both of the parties contained members in all sections of the coun-

try, but the Federalists were most numerous in the commercial centers of the Northeast, though also strong in such Southern seaports as Charleston, while the Republicans were most numerous in the rural areas of the South and the West.

Unlike the old Antifederalists, the new Republicans did not denounce the Constitution. On the contrary, they professed to be its special friends and accused their opponents of violating it.

Republicans and Federalists differed in their social philosophies as well as in their economic interests and their constitutional views. Their differences in social outlook are seen in their reactions to the progress of the revolution in France. When that revolution first began, as a rather mild movement in favor of constitutional monarchy and the rights of man, practically all Americans hailed it as a step in the right direction. But when the revolution went to radical extremes, with attacks on organized religion, the overthrow of the monarchy, and eventually the guillotining of the King and Queen, Americans adopted different views about the events in France, the Federalists denouncing and the Republicans applauding them. Indeed, many of the Republicans imitated the French radicals (the Jacobins) by cutting their hair short, wearing pantaloons, and addressing one another as "Citizen" Smith or "Citizeness" Jones. Thus, for a time, it was possible to tell a man's party by his manners and appearance, for the Federalists kept the

old-fashioned long hair or powdered wig, knee breeches, and traditional etiquette of the gentleman. Republicans accused the Federalists of being aristocratic and even "monarchical." Federalists referred to the Republicans, in horrified tones, as "Jacobins" and as "Jacobinical rabble"—terms that then had much the same implication as the word "communist" was to have many years later.

The two parties had different leanings in foreign affairs. Both were pro-American, but Jefferson and the Republicans believed that

American interests would best be served by maintaining close relations with France, while Hamilton and the Federalists believed that friendship with Great Britain was essential for the success of the United States.

When the time came for the election of 1792, the Republicans had no candidate to put up against Washington. Jefferson as well as Hamilton urged him to run for a second term, and the President consented for the good of the country, though he would have preferred to retire to Mount Vernon.

## **Asserting National Sovereignty**

Under the Federalists the new government disposed of questions that the old government of the Confederation had scarcely begun to deal with, questions not only of public finance but also of the frontier and diplomacy.

### **SECURING THE FRONTIER**

During the early 1790s, while the American people began to be divided between two political parties, they became more strongly united than ever in their loyalty to the government itself. Previously, during the 1780s, the old Congress had been powerless to tie the outlying parts of the country firmly to the United States, as farmers in western Massachusetts rose in revolt and settlers in Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee toyed with the idea of separating these territories from the Union. Now, however, the Washington administration made the power of the federal government felt even on the farthest reaches of the frontier.

The federal authority was challenged when, in 1794, the farmers of western Pennsylvania refused to pay the whiskey excise and terrorized the would-be tax collectors, much as the colonists had done throughout America at the time of the Stamp Act. The so-called Whiskey Rebellion was not left to the authorities of Pennsylvania as Shays' Rebellion had been left to the authorities of Massachusetts. Urged on by Hamilton, Washington took drastic steps. Calling out the militia of three states, he raised

an army of nearly 15,000, a larger force than he had commanded against the British during most of the Revolution, and he personally accompanied this army as far as the town of Bedford. At the approach of the militiamen, the farmers around Pittsburgh, where the rebellion centered, either ran for cover or stayed home and professed to be law-abiding citizens. The rebellion quickly collapsed.

While the whiskey rebels were intimidated into obedience, other frontiersmen were made loyal to the government by its acceptance of new states as members of the Union. First to be admitted were two of the original thirteen, North Carolina (1789) and Rhode Island (1790), both of which had ratified the Constitution when they found that a bill of rights was definitely to be added and that they could not conveniently go on as independent commonwealths. Then Vermont, which had had its own state government since the Revolution, was accepted as the fourteenth state (1791) after New York and New Hampshire finally agreed to give up their claims to sovereignty over the Green Mountain country. Next came Kentucky (1792) with the consent of Virginia, which previously had governed the Kentucky counties as its own. After North Carolina finally ceded its Western lands to the Union, these were given a territorial government similar to that of the Northwest Territory and after six years became the state of Tennessee (1796). With the admission of these frontier states, the schemes for separating Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee from the Union soon came to an end.

In the more remote areas of the Northwest and the Southwest, meanwhile, the government had to contend with the Indians and their foreign allies, British and Spanish, in order to get a firm grasp upon all the territory belonging to the United States. The Indians of the Southwest—Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws—were led by the colorful and vengeful Alexander McGillivray, a half-breed Creek chieftain who had fought as a Tory during the Revolution and who continued to hate Americans. In his efforts to resist the advance of American frontiersmen into the lower Mississippi Valley, McGillivray received the support and encouragement of Spain. In 1790 President Washington tried to buy peace with the Southwestern Indians by inviting McGillivray to New York and agreeing to pay him \$100,000. Despite McGillivray's treaty with the United States, the Indians continued to accept subsidies from the Spaniards and to raid American settlements along the border. At last, in 1793–1794, the Tennesseans went on the war-path themselves, their militia invading the Indian country and chastising several of the tribes. Thus the Southwestern frontier was made safe for the time being.

In the Northwest the government pursued a policy of force against the Indians, even at some risk of becoming involved in hostilities with their protector and ally, Great Britain. Two expeditions failed before a third one finally succeeded in the conquest of the Ohio country. Washington gave the frontier command to General Wayne, who, despite his nickname "Mad Anthony," was a careful planner as well as a dashing soldier. With over 4,000 men, including a large contingent of Kentucky sharpshooters, Wayne moved cautiously toward the Maumee River, building forts as he went. The British officials in Canada, who were providing the Indians with supplies, themselves ordered the construction of a fort about twenty miles from the mouth of the river, well within the boundary of the United States. Near the British fort, at a place where trees had been blown over by a windstorm, Wayne in the summer of 1794 met and decisively defeated the Indians in the Battle of Fallen Timbers, the British garrison prudently keeping out of the fight. Next summer the Indians agreed in the Treaty of Greenville to abandon to the white men most of what afterward became the state of Ohio.

Before the government could be sure of its hold upon the border areas, it had to bring to terms the foreign powers that persisted in exerting influence there—Great Britain and Spain. In its diplomacy the Washington administration, by taking advantage of the opportunities that arose from the accidents of international politics, managed to reassert American independence and redeem the West.

### **MAINTAINING NEUTRALITY**

When Washington became President, Great Britain had not yet sent a minister to the United States, though all the other powers of Europe (except Russia) had entered into normal diplomatic relations with the young republic. In Congress Madison and the Republicans argued that Great Britain, in refusing to make a commercial treaty with the United States, was waging a kind of economic warfare against this country, and that the United States should retaliate by imposing special customs duties and harbor dues, in excess of the regular rates, upon her goods and ships. Though this legislation did not pass, the threat of it induced the British government finally, in 1791, to dispatch a regular minister to America.

A new crisis in foreign affairs faced the Washington administration when the French revolutionary government, after guillotining King Louis XVI, went to war in 1793 with Great Britain and her allies. Should the United States recognize the radical government of France by accepting a diplomatic representative from it? Was the United States obligated by the alliance of 1778 to go to war on the side of France? These questions Washington put to his official advisers, and both Hamilton and Jefferson recommended a policy of neutrality, though they presented quite different arguments for it. Washington decided to recognize the French government and to issue a proclamation announcing the determination of the United States to remain at peace. The proclamation (1793), though it did not mention the word "neutrality," was generally interpreted as a neutrality statement, which it actually was. Next year Congress passed a Neutrality Act, forbidding American citizens to participate in the war and prohibiting the use of American soil as a base of operations for either side.

The first challenge to American neutrality came from France. Not that the French revolutionaries asked for a declaration of war: they did not, for they supposed that the United States would be of more use to them as a non-belligerent. Their purposes became apparent when their first minister to this country arrived. Instead of landing at Philadelphia and presenting himself immediately to the President, the youthful and brash Citizen Edmond Genêt disembarked at Charleston. There he made plans for using American ports to outfit French warships, issued letters of marque and reprisal authorizing American shipowners to serve as French privateers, and commissioned the aging George Rogers Clark to undertake an overland expedition against the possessions of Spain, which at the moment was an ally of Great Britain and an enemy of France. In all these steps, Genêt brazenly disregarded Washington's proclamation and flagrantly violated the Neutrality Act. When he finally reached Philadelphia, after being acclaimed by pro-French crowds on a tour through the interior, he got a stony reception from the President. He then assumed that the people were behind him, and he repeatedly appealed to them over the President's head. His conduct not only infuriated Washington and the Federalists but also embarrassed all except the most ardent Francophiles among the Republicans. At last Washington demanded that the French government recall him, but by that time Genêt's party, the Girondins, were out of power in France and the still more extreme Jacobins in control, so it would not have been safe for him to return. Generously the President granted him political asylum in the United States, and he settled down to live to a ripe old age with his American wife on a Long Island farm. Meanwhile the neutrality policy had survived its first great test.

The second challenge, an even greater one, came from Great Britain. Early in 1794 the Royal Navy suddenly seized hundreds of American ships engaged in trade in the French West Indies. The pretext for these seizures was a British interpretation of international law—known as the Rule of 1756—which held that a trade prohibited in peacetime (as American trade between France and the French overseas possessions had been) could not be legally

opened in time of war. At the news of the seizures, the prevalent opinion in the United States became as strongly anti-British as it had recently been anti-French, and the anti-British feeling rose still higher at the report that the Governor-General of Canada had delivered a rousing and warlike speech to the Indians on the northwestern frontier. With peace thus endangered, Hamilton grew concerned, for war would mean an end to imports from England, and most of the revenue for maintaining his financial system came from duties on those imports.

### **JAY'S TREATY**

To Hamilton and to other Federalists it seemed that this was no time for ordinary diplomacy. Jefferson had resigned in 1793 to devote himself to organizing a political opposition, and the State Department was now in the hands of an even more ardently pro-French Virginian, Edmund Randolph. By-passing the State Department, Washington named as a special commissioner to England the staunch New York Federalist, former Secretary for Foreign Affairs under the old Confederation, and current Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, John Jay. Jay was instructed to secure damages for the recent spoliation, withdrawal of British forces from the frontier posts, and a satisfactory commercial treaty, without violating the terms of the existing treaty of amity and commerce with France, signed at the time of the alliance in 1778.

The treaty that Jay negotiated (1794) was a long and complex document, dealing with frontier posts, boundaries, debts, commerce, ship seizures, and neutral rights. It yielded more to Great Britain and obtained less for the United States than Jay had been authorized to give or instructed to get. When the terms were published in the United States, the treaty was denounced more than any treaty before or since, and Jay himself was burned in effigy in various parts of the country. The Republicans were unanimous in decrying it; they said it was a departure from neutrality, favoring Great Britain and unfair to France. Even some of the Federalists were outraged by its terms, those in

## Jay's Treaty [1794]

**Frontier Posts.** "His Majesty will withdraw all his troops and garrisons from all posts and places within the boundary lines assigned by the treaty of peace to the United States "

**Boundaries.** Joint surveys will be made to locate the United States-Canadian boundary west of the Lake of the Woods and at the northeast, between Maine and New Brunswick

**Debts.** The United States "will make full and complete compensation" for uncollectable debts owed by Americans to British creditors

**Commerce.** There shall be freedom of commerce and navigation between the United States and Great Britain and the British East Indies (Article XII, permitting the United States to trade with the British West Indies also, but only in relatively small ships, was stricken out before ratification )

**Ship Seizures.** The British government will compensate Americans for ships and cargoes illegally captured in the past, the amount of payment to be determined by arbitration

**Neutral Rights.** American ships carrying enemy (French) property, when captured by the British, shall be taken to British ports and the enemy property removed (This was inconsistent with the usual American principle that "free ships make free goods ")

the South objecting to its provision for the payment of the pre-Revolutionary debts. Opponents of the treaty went to extraordinary lengths to defeat it in the Senate, and French agents aided them and cheered them on. The American minister to France, James Monroe, and even the Secretary of State, Edmund Randolph, cooperated closely with the French in a desperate attempt to prevent ratification. Nevertheless, after amending the treaty a bit, the Senate gave its consent.

There was much to be said for Jay's Treaty, despite its very real shortcomings. By means of it the United States gained valuable time for continued peaceful development, obtained undisputed sovereignty over all the Northwest, and secured a reasonably satisfactory commercial agreement with the nation whose trade was most important. More than that, the treaty led immediately to a settlement of the worst of the outstanding differences with Spain.

In Madrid the Spanish foreign minister feared that the understanding between Great Britain and the United States might prove a prelude to joint operations between those two

countries against Spain's possessions in North America. Spain was about to change sides in the European war, abandoning Great Britain for France, and it was therefore to Spain's interest to appease the United States. The relentless pressure of American frontiersmen advancing toward the Southwest made it doubtful whether Spain could long hold her borderlands in any event. And so, when Thomas Pinckney arrived in Spain as a special negotiator, he had no difficulty in gaining practically everything that the United States had sought from the Spaniards for over a decade. Pinckney's Treaty (1795) recognized the right of Americans to navigate the Mississippi to its mouth and to deposit goods at New Orleans for reloading on ocean-going ships; fixed the northern boundary of Florida where Americans always had insisted it should be, along the thirty-first parallel; and bound the Spanish authorities to prevent the Indians in Florida from raiding across the border.

Thus, before Washington had completed his second term in office, the United States had freed itself from the encroachments of both Great Britain and Spain.

## Downfall of the Federalists

After George Washington had left the Presidency, the Federalists overreached themselves in their grasp for power. They faced the dilemma of all rulers in a government that depends upon the will of the people—that is, the dilemma of choosing between governmental strength and individual freedom—and they made their choice in favor of strong government at the expense of popular liberty and popular support. The Federalists never won another presidential election after 1796, yet their main achievements endured and, in one form or another, still endure.

### ELECTION OF 1796

As the time approached for the election of 1796, some of the party friends of Washington urged him to run again. Already twice elected without a single vote cast against him in the electoral college, he could be counted upon to hold the Federalist party together and carry it to a third great victory. But Washington, weary of the burdens of the presidential office, disgusted with the partisan abuse that was being heaped upon him, longed to retire to his beloved home, Mount Vernon. Though he did not object to a third term in principle, he did not desire one for himself. To make his determination clear, he

composed, with Hamilton's assistance, a long letter to the American people and had it published in a Philadelphia newspaper.

When Washington in this "Farewell Address" referred to the "insidious wiles of foreign influence," he was not writing merely for rhetorical effect. He had certain real evils in mind. Lately he had dismissed the Secretary of State, Edmund Randolph, and had recalled the minister to France, James Monroe, for working hand in hand with the French to defeat Jay's Treaty. The French were still interfering in American politics with the hope of defeating the Federalists in the forthcoming presidential election.

There was no doubt that Jefferson would be the candidate of the Republicans, and he chose as his running mate the New York Republican leader, Aaron Burr. With Washington out of the running, there was some question as to who the Federalist candidate would be. Hamilton, the very personification of Federalism, was not "available" because his forthright views had aroused too many enemies. John Jay was too closely identified with his unpopular treaty, and Thomas Pinckney, though his treaty had been enthusiastically received, had the handicap of being a South Carolinian at a time when party leaders thought the next candidate should be a Northerner. John



**John Adams**

*When elected to the Presidency, Adams was almost thirty years younger than the man depicted in this portrait, painted when he was past eighty. The artist was Samuel F. B. Morse. Afterward best known as the inventor of the magnetic telegraph, Morse did not give up painting for invention until he was in his forties. He was born in Massachusetts, the son of Jedidiah Morse, who was America's foremost geographer of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The younger Morse graduated from Yale, studied art under Benjamin West and Washington Allston in England, and in 1823 opened a studio in New York. He helped to found and was the first president of the National Academy of Design. (In the Brooklyn Museum Collection)*



Adams, who as Vice President was directly associated with none of the Federalist measures, finally got the nomination for President at a caucus of the Federalists in Congress, and Pinckney received the nomination for Vice President.

With Washington stepping aside, the Federalist party became torn by fierce factional rivalries. Hamilton disliked Adams and preferred Pinckney, as did many other Federalists, especially in the South. New Englanders, on the other hand, had no particular liking for Pinckney and feared a plot to make him President instead of Adams. The result was a near disaster for the Federalists. They elected a majority of their presidential electors, despite the electioneering tactics of the French government, whose efforts may have boomeranged and helped the Federalists. But when the electors balloted in the various states, some of the Pinckney men declined to vote for Adams, and a still larger number of the Adams men declined to vote for Pinckney. So Pinckney received fewer votes than Jefferson, and Adams only three more than Jefferson. The next President was to be a Federalist, but the Vice President was to be a Republican!

By virtue of his diplomatic services during the Revolution, his writings as a conservative political philosopher, and his devotion to the public weal as he saw it, "Honest John" Adams ranks as one of the greatest American statesmen. Like most prominent members of the illustrious Adams family afterward, however, he lacked the politician's touch which is essential for successful leadership in a republican society. Even Washington, remote and austere as he sometimes seems to have been, was fairly adept at conciliating factions and maintaining party harmony. Unwisely, the new President chose to continue Washington's department heads in office. Most of them were friends of Hamilton, and they looked to him for advice, though he held no official post.

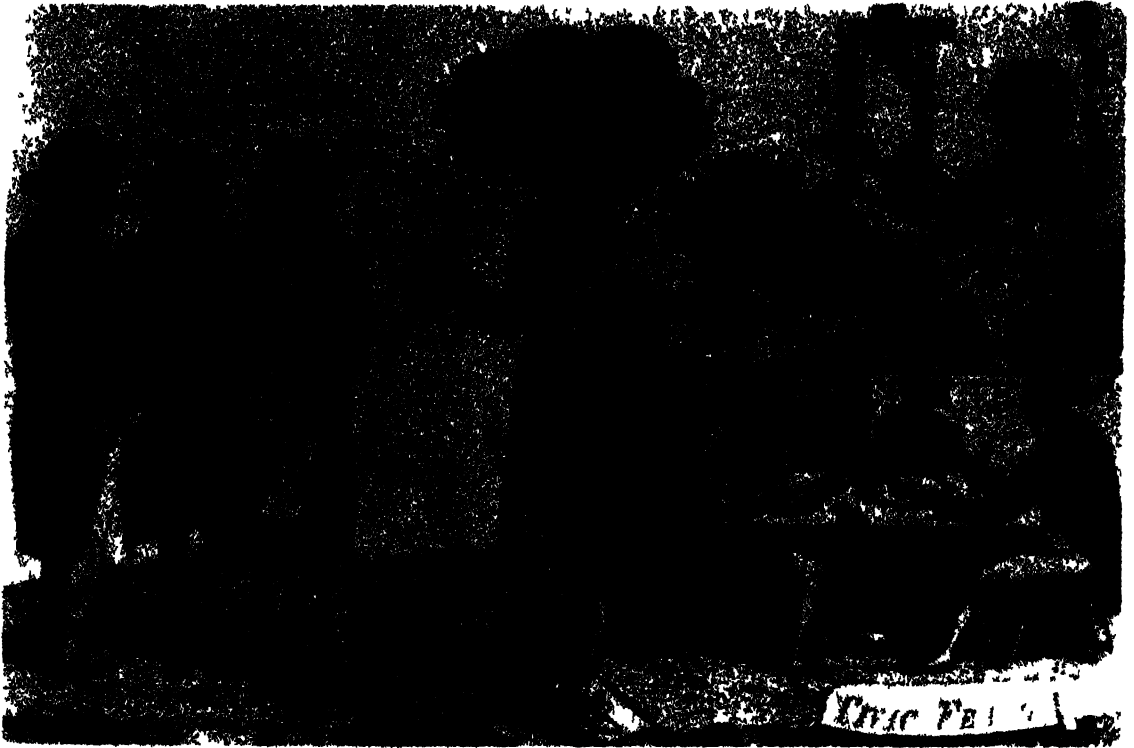
### QUASI-WAR WITH FRANCE

As American relations with Great Britain and Spain improved in consequence of Jay's and Pinckney's treaties, relations with France, now under the government of the Directory, went from bad to worse. Despite the victory of the

Federalists in the election of 1796, the leaders of the Directory assumed that France had the sympathy and support of the mass of the American people and could undermine the Adams administration by frustrating it in foreign affairs. Therefore the French, asserting that they were applying the same principles of neutral rights as the United States and Great Britain had adopted in Jay's Treaty, continued to capture American ships on the high seas and, in many cases, to imprison the crews. When Minister Monroe left France after his recall, the French went out of their way to show their affection for him and for the Republican party. When the South Carolina Federalist Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, a brother of Thomas Pinckney, arrived in France to replace Monroe, the Directory considered him *persona non grata* and refused to receive him as the official representative of the United States.

War seemed likely unless the Adams administration could settle the difficulties with France. Some of the President's advisers, in particular his Secretary of State, the stiff-backed New England Francophobe Timothy Pickering, favored war. Others urged a special effort for peace, and even Hamilton approved the idea of appointing commissioners to approach the Directory. Adams, himself a peace man, appointed a bipartisan commission of three: C. C. Pinckney, the recently rejected minister, John Marshall, a Virginia Federalist, afterward famous as the great Chief Justice of the United States; and Elbridge Gerry, a Massachusetts Republican but a personal friend of the President's. In France, in 1797, the three Americans were met by three agents of the Directory's foreign minister, Prince Talleyrand, who had a reputation as the wizard of European diplomacy but who did not understand the psychology of Americans, even though he had lived for a time in the United States. Talleyrand's agents demanded a loan for France and a bribe for French officials before they would deal with Adams' commissioners. The response of the commissioners was summed up in Pinckney's laconic words: "No! No! Not a sixpence!"

When Adams received the commissioners' report, he sent a message to Congress in which he urged readiness for war, denounced the French for their insulting treatment of the United States, and vowed he would not appoint



### The X Y Z Affair

*In this American cartoon of 1799, the five-man directory of France is represented by the five-headed creature in the center. He is demanding a bribe from the American commissioners, John Marshall, C. C. Pinckney, and Elbridge Gerry. Actually the hint of a money payment had come from three of the French foreign minister Talleyrand's agents, whom President Adams later designated as Messrs "X," "Y," and "Z" (The Henry E. Huntington Library)*

another minister to France until he knew the minister would be "received, respected and honored as the representative of a great, free, powerful and independent nation." The Republicans, doubting the President's charge that the United States had been insulted, asked for proof. Adams then turned the commissioners' report over to Congress, after deleting the names of the three Frenchmen and designating them only as Messrs. X, Y, and Z. When the report was published, the "X Y Z Affair" provoked even more of a reaction than Adams had bargained for. It aroused the martial spirit of most Americans, made the Federalists more popular than ever as the party of patriotism, and led to a limited and undeclared war with France (1798-1800).

With the cooperation of Congress, which quickly passed the necessary laws, Adams cut off all trade with France, abrogated the treaties of 1778, and authorized public and private vessels of the United States to capture French armed ships on the high seas. Congress set up a Department of the Navy (1798) and appropriated money for the construction of warships to supplement the hundreds of privateers and the small number of government vessels already built for the protection of American shipping in the Mediterranean against the Barbary pirates. The new United States Navy soon gave a good account of itself. Its warships won a number of duels with French vessels of their own class and captured a total of eighty-five ships including armed merchantmen.

Having abandoned neutrality, the United States now was cooperating so closely with Great Britain as to be virtually a cobelligerent, though technically at peace. When the British offered to lend a part of their fleet to the United States, President Adams declined to borrow, since he preferred to build up a navy of his own. Nevertheless, the British provided shot and shell to make up for the deficient American

supplies, furnished officers to help with the training and direction of American crews, and exchanged signaling information so that British and American ships could communicate readily with one another. Thus the United States was involved in the world war as a kind of associate member of the coalition against France.

The French foreign minister, Talleyrand, finally began to see the wisdom of an accommo-

#### Building the Navy

*After the Revolutionary War the United States abandoned the warships it had accumulated, and from 1783 to 1798 there was no American navy. Then, with the outbreak of undeclared hostilities with France, the Department of the Navy was established and a naval building program begun. In that age of wooden sailing ships, there were three main categories of war vessels: (1) ships of the line, or line-of-battle ships, which were the largest and most heavily armed (roughly corresponding to twentieth-century battleships or dreadnoughts); (2) frigates, which were smaller and faster and had fewer guns (comparable to modern cruisers); (3) corvettes, sloops of war, and other relatively small craft (somewhat like the light cruisers, destroyers, and gunboats of the present). At the outset the United States navy eschewed line-of-battle ships and placed its chief reliance on specially designed frigates which were faster, more maneuverable, and more heavily gunned than their European counterparts. In 1798 the frigates United States, Constitution, and Constellation, already partly built, were completed, and the Philadelphia and several others were started. The illustration shows work in progress on the Philadelphia in a Philadelphia shipyard. This frigate was not finished in time to be used against the French, but it saw plenty of action later (1803) in the war with Tripoli. Tripolitan pirates captured the ship, and Americans in a daring raid destroyed her to prevent the enemy's using her against them. (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania)*



dation with the Americans. He took notice of the rapprochement between the United States and Great Britain, the successes of the American Navy, and the failure of the American people to show the expected enthusiasm for the cause of France. He was enlightened in regard to American public opinion by George Logan, a Philadelphia Quaker who, with no official authorization but with a letter of introduction from Vice President Jefferson, visited France to work for peace in the midst of the undeclared war. After Logan returned, President Adams gave him a sympathetic hearing, though the Federalists in Congress passed a law, the so-called Logan Act, to prohibit citizens from engaging in private and unofficial diplomacy with foreign governments in the future.

When, in 1800, Adams' new three-man commission arrived in France, Napoleon Bonaparte was in power as First Consul. The Americans requested that France terminate the treaties of 1778 and pay damages for seizures of American ships. Napoleon replied that, if the United States had any claim to damages, the claim must rest upon the treaties, and if the treaties were ended, the claim must be abandoned. Napoleon had his way. The Americans agreed to a new treaty that canceled the old ones, arranged for reciprocity in commerce, and ignored the question of damages. When Adams submitted this treaty to the Senate, the extreme Federalists raised so many objections that its final ratification was delayed until after he had left office. Nevertheless, the "quasi-war" had come to an honorable end, and the United States at last had freed itself from the entanglements and embarrassments of the "perpetual" alliance with France.

## **REPRESSION AND PROTEST**

The outbreak of hostilities in 1798 had given the Federalists an advantage over the political opposition, and in the congressional elections of that year they increased their majorities in both houses. Meanwhile their newly found power went to their heads. Some of them schemed to go on winning elections by passing laws to weaken and to silence the opposition. They had as an excuse the supposed necessity of protecting the nation from dangerous foreign

influence in the midst of the undeclared war. By persecuting their critics, the Federalists produced a crop of Republican martyrs, gave rise to protests against their disregard of the Constitution, and provoked a reaction that helped to bring their party to defeat.

Since many Republican critics of the administration were foreigners by birth, especially Irish or French, the Federalists in Congress thought it desirable to limit the political rights of aliens and make it more difficult for them to become citizens of the United States. The Federalists struck at the civil liberties of both native Americans and the foreign-born in a series of laws commonly known as the Alien and Sedition Acts.

President Adams did not invoke the Alien Act nor deport any aliens, but this law together with the Naturalization Act doubtless had some effect in discouraging immigration and encouraging many foreigners already here to leave. The administration did enforce the Sedition Act, arresting about two dozen men and convicting ten of them. Most of these were Republican newspaper editors whose writings, while tending to bring the Federalists into disrepute, were not truly seditious at all. One of the editors merely had expressed the wish that, when a salute was fired in honor of the President, the wadding of the cannon had "struck him in the rear bulge of the breeches."

The Republicans had no reason to look to the Supreme Court for relief. Indeed, the Court never yet had declared an act of Congress unconstitutional, and the Republicans denied that it had the power to do so. They believed, however, that the recent Federalist legislation, particularly the Sedition Act, was unconstitutional, for the First Amendment stated that Congress should pass no law abridging freedom of speech or of the press.

What agency of government should decide the question of constitutionality? The Republican leaders Jefferson and Madison concluded that the state legislatures should decide. They ably expressed their view in two sets of resolutions, one written (anonymously) by Jefferson and adopted by the Kentucky legislature (1798, 1799), and the other drafted by Madison and approved by the Virginia legislature (1798). These Kentucky and Virginia resolutions asserted the following doctrines. The federal government had been formed by a "compact"

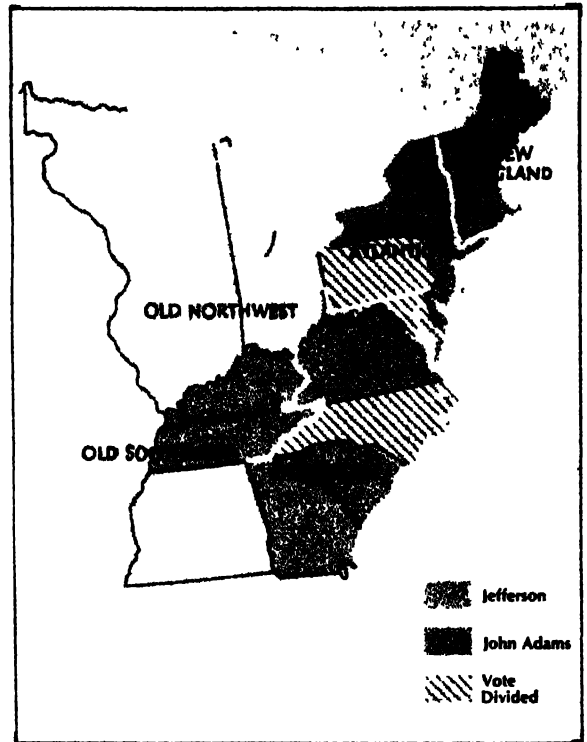
or contract among the states. It was a limited government, possessing only certain delegated powers. Whenever it exercised any additional and undelegated powers, its acts were "unauthoritative, void, and of no force." The parties to the contract, the states, must decide for themselves when and whether the central government exceeded its powers. And "nullification" by the states was the "rightful remedy" whenever the general government went too far. The resolutions urged all the states to join in declaring the Alien and Sedition Acts null and void and in requesting their repeal at the next session of Congress, but none of the others went along with Virginia and Kentucky.

### ELECTION OF 1800

In the election of 1800 Jefferson and Burr, representing the alliance of Virginia and New York, were again the Republican candidates. Adams was running for reelection on the Federalist ticket, and his running mate was C. C. Pinckney.

During the nearly twelve years of Federalist rule, the party had created numerous political enemies in consequence of Hamilton's financial program, the suppression of the Whiskey Rebellion, Jay's Treaty, and the Alien and Sedition Acts. Denouncing these measures, and especially the last of them, the Republicans made state rights and constitutional liberties the main issues of their campaign in 1800. They pictured Adams as a tyrant and a man who wanted to be King. The Federalists, on the other hand, described Jefferson as a dangerous radical and his followers as wild men who, if they should get into power, would bring on a reign of terror comparable to that of the French Revolution at its worst.

The contest was close, and the outcome in the electoral college depended upon the voting in one state, New York. In New York City the vice-presidential candidate, Burr, was the organizer of Republican victory. The Revolutionary veterans of the city had formed the Tammany Society to maintain their wartime fellowship and to combat the pretensions of the Society of the Cincinnati, the exclusive and aristocratic organization of Revolutionary officers. Though not himself a member of Tammany, Burr converted it into a political machine



### Election of 1800

and, with its aid, carried the city for the Republicans by such a large majority as to carry the state also. The Republicans gained control of the legislature, and since New York was one of the states in which the legislature cast the electoral vote, the Republicans could count upon that vote in the presidential election.

When the state electors cast their votes, Adams received a total of 65 and Pinckney 64. Jefferson got 73 and so did Burr. To avoid such a tie, Republican leaders had meant for at least one of their electors to refrain from giving Burr his vote. But through a misunderstanding—some said that Burr himself was secretly responsible—the plan went awry. And so the election was not yet over: in accordance with the Constitution the decision between the two highest—between Burr and Jefferson—was up to the House of Representatives, with the delegation from each state casting a single vote.

Since the Federalists controlled a majority of the states' votes in the existing Congress, they had the privilege of deciding which of

their opponents was to be the next President, though the Republicans, in making their nominations, had clearly intended for Jefferson to have the first place on their ticket. Some of the more extreme of the Federalists now hoped to postpone or to prevent any breaking of the tie and, instead, to make new arrangements for the presidential succession so that the highest office in the land would still fall to a Federalist. Others, fearing chaos and possible civil war if no election were made, thought it would be better to come to an understanding with Burr and elect him. Hamilton disapproved of both proposals. Though he had a low opinion of Jefferson, he had a still lower one of Burr, his bitter rival in law and politics in New York. Burr himself remained strangely silent, neither electioneering openly for himself nor publicly refusing to accept office at the hands of the Federalists.

During the winter of 1800–1801 the House balloted again and again without mustering a majority for either candidate. Finally, only a few weeks before inauguration day, some of the Federalist die-hards gave in, the tie was broken, and Jefferson was named as President, Burr as Vice President. Afterward one of the Federalists claimed that he had given in because Jefferson's friends had assured him that Jefferson, if elected, would appoint him to a government job and would preserve the main Federalist policies with respect to commerce, the navy, and the public debt, while making no

wholesale removals of Federalists from the lower offices of the government.

In addition to winning a majority of the presidential electors in 1800, the Republicans also won a majority of the seats in both houses of the next Congress. The only branch of the government left in Federalist hands was the judiciary, and Adams and his fellow partisans during his last months in office took steps to make their hold upon the courts secure.

By the Judiciary Act of 1801 the Federalists succeeded in reducing the number of Supreme Court justiceships by one but at the same time greatly increasing the number of federal judgeships as a whole. The act created a separate system of circuit courts of appeal, between the federal district courts and the Supreme Court. Formerly (in accordance with the Judiciary Act of 1789) a district judge had sat with two Supreme Court justices to hear appeals on the circuit. The new law also provided for ten additional district judgeships.

To these newly created positions Adams proceeded to appoint deserving Federalists. It was said that he stayed up until midnight on his last day in office, March 3, 1801, in order to complete the signing of the judges' commissions, and so these officeholders were known as his "midnight appointments." Since federal judges held office for life—that is, with good behavior—Jefferson as the incoming President would be powerless to remove Adams' appointees. Or so the Federalists assumed.

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\*Titles available in paperback.

# The Jeffersonian Era







## Seven

Thomas Jefferson and the Republicans, while out of power, had championed the rights of the states against the powers of the federal government. They denounced the Federalists for stretching those powers too far and interpreting the Constitution too loosely. Jefferson stood for governmental principles that were appropriate to the kind of country he envisaged – a country made up mostly of independent farmers and happily free from the workshops, the industrial towns, and the city mobs of Europe. He favored France and the French influence against England and English ways. A man of the Enlightenment like Franklin, he took a rational and skeptical approach to life both here and hereafter.

But during those years the young republic was beginning to develop in directions that would eventually make some (but by no means all) of Jefferson's views seem obsolete. New machinery, derived from England or devised at home, gave a little start to the growth of an industrial society, with factories and factory towns dotting the American countryside. The English tone prevailed over the French in most things of the mind. To the extent that American writers resisted the English influence, they tended to arouse a national feeling and thus to diminish the particularist sentiment, the sense of identification with an individual state. And a renewal of religious revivalism, coinciding with Jefferson's taking office, almost submerged the rational philosophy that had been rampant for some time.

Moreover, once Jefferson and his party followers were in control of the government, they had to deal with situations that seemed to demand strong, unfettered action. Soon the Republicans were going even further, in some respects, than the Federalists had gone in the exercise of federal authority. If Jefferson appeared to be inconsistent, so did many of his opponents, for they now adopted the theory of state rights and turned his former arguments against him.

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### Thomas Jefferson

*Jefferson was sixty-one years old when this portrait was painted, in 1805, at the President's mansion in Washington, by Rembrandt Peale, son of Charles Willson Peale. (Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society, New York City)*

But the idea of state rights was not the whole of the Jeffersonian philosophy. He stood primarily for the interests of the majority as he conceived them. As

President, he did much to advance those interests, his greatest achievement being to double the territory of the United States.

## Spirit of the Young Republic

Having won political independence, the American people—or at least some of them—also aspired to a kind of cultural independence. More

than that, they looked forward to a time when (as a “Poem on the Rising Glory of America” had foretold in 1772) their “happy land” would

### A School in Session About 1800

*In such a one-room school, children of practically all ages were brought together. While one group recited, the rest learned their lessons—or were supposed to. Paper and ink were scarce: a slate and a slate pencil were commonly used instead. There was little in the way of furnishings except for backless benches and a few desks, usually placed under the windows, where the light was best. The teacher had to look out for the fire and perform the other chores of a janitor. Often the teacher was a college student, earning money during the long winter vacation from his own studies, or he was a recent college graduate supporting himself while he prepared for the law and politics. Daniel Webster and Thaddeus Stevens once taught school, and so did many another young man who afterward became prominent in public life. (Library of Congress)*



be the "seat of empire" and the "final stage" of civilization, with "glorious works of high invention and of wond'rous art." The United States, as Joel Barlow saw it in his *Vision of Columbus* (1787), was destined to be "the last and greatest theatre for the improvement of mankind."

## EDUCATION AND THE PROFESSIONS

In certain respects the Revolutionary War temporarily handicapped American intellectual life. Some learned men turned from science and scholarship to military or political service. The noted astronomer David Rittenhouse, for example, left his telescopes and devoted himself to a Revolutionary committee, the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, while advising his countrymen to abandon schools and concentrate on defense. Many schools did close, especially in rural areas, and most of the colleges were disrupted. Harvard buildings were used as American army barracks; Nassau Hall at Princeton was damaged during Washington's New Jersey campaign; and the William and Mary campus became the military headquarters of Cornwallis before the Battle of Yorktown.

But the Revolution also stimulated intellectual activity and brought forth ideas that were to have lasting consequences. Through military service thousands of young men got better acquainted with their own country, and by reading patriotic pamphlets, or at least hearing them discussed, these soldiers received something of a political education. With the French alliance there came from France not only troops and supplies but also ideas—giving further spread to the skeptical, experimental, scientific notions of the Enlightenment. And, with independence as an accomplished fact, it seemed to thoughtful Americans that widespread literacy and learning were absolutely essential to the success of the new republic. Thomas Jefferson, for one, called for a "crusade against ignorance."

The friends of learning advocated not merely education as such but a special kind of education, one that would fill the minds of youth with patriotic, republican thoughts. The Massachusetts geographer Jedidiah Morse, author of *Geography Made Easy* (1784), said the country must have its own textbooks so that the

people would not be infected with the monarchical and aristocratic ideas of England. The Connecticut schoolmaster and lawyer Noah Webster likewise contended that the American schoolboy should be educated as a patriot. "As soon as he opens his lips," Webster wrote, "he should rehearse the history of his own country; he should lisp the praise of liberty, and of those illustrious heroes and statesmen who have wrought a revolution in her favor."

To foster a distinctive culture and unify the nation, Webster insisted upon a simplified and Americanized spelling—"honor" instead of "honour," for example. His *American Spelling Book* (1783), commonly known as the "blue-backed speller," eventually sold over 100 million copies to become the best-selling book (except for the Bible) in the entire history of American publishing. Webster also wrote grammars and other schoolbooks. His school dictionary (1806) was republished in many editions and eventually was much enlarged to form *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828). By means of his speller and his dictionary he succeeded in establishing a national standard of words and usages for the United States.

In their first constitutions, several of the states endorsed the principle of public education, but none actually required the establishment of free schools. A Massachusetts law of 1789 reaffirmed the colonial laws providing for the support of schools by the various towns. Jedidiah Morse observed later that the enforcement of the law was lax in many places. Even in Boston only seven public schools existed in 1790, and most of these were poorly housed; more than twice as many private schools were in operation. In Virginia, Jefferson as wartime governor proposed a plan by which the elements of reading and writing should be provided for all children, and secondary and higher education for the gifted, with state scholarships for the needy. The plan was not enacted into law. As late as 1815 none of the states (not even Massachusetts) had a comprehensive public school system in actual operation.

Outside of New England, schooling continued to be viewed as the responsibility of the family and the church rather than the state. In the Middle Atlantic region and the South, most schools were run by religious groups, by pro-

prietary schoolmasters, or by philanthropic societies. Though requiring tuition from parents who could afford it, many schools accepted the poor without pay. In the cities, special organizations were formed for the education of the poor. One of these, the New York Free School Society, introduced the Lancastrian method from England (1806), to economize on instruction costs: the teacher taught a lesson to several superior pupils, and then these "monitors" drilled groups of their fellow pupils.

During and after the Revolution, private academies sprang up in increasing numbers. Many were patterned after the academies founded by the Phillips family at Andover, Massachusetts (1778), and at Exeter, New Hampshire (1781). By 1815 there were thirty private secondary schools in Massachusetts, thirty-seven in New York, and more than one

hundred in the country as a whole. Most of these admitted only boys, but a few academies or seminaries were provided for girls. Salem Female Academy, established in 1772 by North Carolina Moravians, was one of the earliest.

At the outbreak of the Revolution there had been a total of nine colleges in all the colonies; in 1800 there were twenty-two in the various states, and the number continued steadily to increase thereafter. Whereas all but two of the colonial colleges were sectarian in origin and spirit, a majority of those founded during the first three decades of independence were nondenominational. Especially significant in foreshadowing the future pattern of higher education was the fact that five were state institutions: the universities of Georgia (1785), North Carolina (1789), Vermont (1791), Ohio (1804), and South Carolina (1805). For the time

#### **View of New Bedford**

*New Bedford, Massachusetts, a seaport about fifty miles south of Boston, began to concentrate on the whaling industry in the 1760s, gained a reputation as the whaling capital of the world, and prospered at the business for a century, until the discovery of petroleum ruined the market for whale oil. This painting, by William Wall, shows the village as it appeared in 1807 (The Whaling Museum, New Bedford, Mass.)*



being, none of these was either quite public or a university in the modern sense. Their offerings were limited, and their financial support was derived mainly from private endowments, gifts, and tuition fees rather than appropriations by the rather niggardly legislatures. Scarcely more than one man in a thousand (and no women at all) had the benefit of such college education as was available.

Jefferson, John Adams, and a few other statesmen nourished the ideal of a true university, providing the best of training in the professions as well as the liberal arts. Nothing came of Jefferson's hope that a national university might be established. As wartime governor of Virginia, he managed to expand the work of William and Mary by adding professorships of law, medicine, and modern languages. George Wythe, the first law professor at the college, taught a remarkable number of youths who afterward became distinguished lawyers and statesmen. Before 1800 the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia College instituted law courses, and Judge Tapping Reeve opened a private law school in Litchfield, Connecticut. As a rule, lawyers got their training, as in colonial times, by "reading law" in the office of a practicing attorney.

Most physicians likewise still studied medicine and gained experience by working with an established practitioner, but several medical schools were in existence by the early 1800s, the oldest of them at the University of Pennsylvania. Its most distinguished professor, and the outstanding physician in America, was Benjamin Rush, who had received his medical degree at Edinburgh. As an army surgeon during the Revolutionary War, Dr. Rush protested against improper sanitation and medical care, which caused many more soldiers to die of camp diseases than of battle wounds. Afterward he interested himself in the effects of diet and drink upon health, and he also made pioneering studies of psychosomatic and psychiatric disorders. As educators, Rush and other physicians had to struggle against age-old superstitions and against popular hostility to the dissection of corpses. In 1788 a riot was provoked when a human limb was hung out of a New York hospital window to dry, and from time to time medical students got into trouble for body snatching, since cadavers seldom were available by legal means.

The science of public as well as private health remained in its infancy. In the summer of 1793 an epidemic of yellow fever raged unchecked in Philadelphia, bringing death to a tenth of the population in one of the worst disasters ever to befall an American city. The physicians were helpless, though Dr. Rush came near to guessing the cause of the epidemic when he explained it as being due to the miasma arising from decomposed matter. The Philadelphia experience stimulated programs for improving sanitation and making cities cleaner, and thus unwittingly the number of breeding places for the mosquito that transmits yellow fever were reduced. In many cases the prevailing medical practices hastened death instead of prolonging life. George Washington probably need not have died from a throat infection in 1799, but his physicians, doing their best according to their knowledge, bled and purged him so thoroughly as to impair his resistance to the disease.

## THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

The Declaration of Independence, with its emphasis on the rights of man, provoked some thought about the rights of women. "By the way," Abigail Adams wrote to her husband John Adams in 1776, "in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands." But Adams gently laughed off his wife's suggestion.

Women earned some consideration through their contributions to the revolutionary cause. They joined willingly in sacrificing their comforts and boycotting British goods. Mercy Otis Warren, sister of James Otis and friend of Abigail Adams, rivaled her brother as a pamphleteer, composing satires and farces that ridiculed British pretensions. Afterwards she wrote a history of the Revolution. During the war, women managed farms and businesses for their absent husbands, or they followed them with the army to cook, wash, and do other chores around the camp. On a hot summer day one wife busied herself on the battlefield, carrying pitchers of water to



**Mercy Otis Warren**  
*Mercy Otis (Mrs James Warren), born in Barnstable, Massachusetts, in 1728, was about thirty-five years old when John Singleton Copley painted this portrait of her. Mrs. Warren was to be a leading propagandist of the Revolution. Copley, of Boston, was an outstanding American portraitist and at first a sympathizer with the Patriot cause and an admirer of Samuel Adams, whose portrait he also painted. In 1774, however, Copley left America to continue his distinguished artistic career in England for the rest of his life. (Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)*

thirsty soldiers (and thus winning legendary fame as "Molly Pitcher"). When her husband fell she took his place at a field gun.

An outstanding American feminist of the time, along with Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Warren, was Judith Sargent Murray, who had shared the studies of her brother while he was preparing for Harvard and who, at the age of eighteen, had married a Massachusetts sea captain. In a 1779 essay Mrs. Murray argued that girls had minds as good as boys'. In a 1784 magazine article, the first of her works to be published, she maintained that education, by making young women self-confident and self-dependent, would keep them from rushing into early marriage for fear of spinsterhood or insecurity. Her trenchant writings on religion, politics, and

manners and customs as well as education, collected in three volumes under the title *The Gleaner* (1798), proved her an essayist at least equal to her leading male contemporaries such as Noah Webster and Philip Freneau.

The women's cause received some support from a few prominent men, among them Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush, and Thomas Paine. The immediate aim was not legal or political rights so much as educational opportunities that, the reformers hoped, would lead to eventual equality, though Yale students in the 1780s debated the question "Whether women ought to be admitted into the magistracy and government of empires and republics." Women gained no new rights, of course, in the Constitution of 1787.

The discussion of women's place, in America and in the world, got added stimulus with the appearance of the English feminist Mary Wollstonecraft's provocative book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). After reading this, Mrs. Murray rejoiced that "the Rights of Women" were beginning to be understood in the United States, and she predicted that girls then growing up would inaugurate "a new era in female history."

No such new era arrived in Mrs. Murray's lifetime (she died in 1820). In the young republic other women achieved individual success as writers. Susanna H. Rowson, for one, wrote a novel, *Charlotte: A Tale of Truth* (1791), that was to be the most popular of all American novels until the appearance sixty years later of another woman author's work, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. With the passing of the revolutionary generation, however, interest in the women's revolution declined, though it never disappeared.

#### LITERATURE AND MUSIC

During the first decades of independence, the most widely read American writings—and some of the greatest ones (such as *The Federalist*)—were polemical and political, not esthetic. In pamphlets and newspapers the literate American followed the arguments about British colonial policy, the aims of the Revolution, the question of a new Constitution, and the party contests of the young republic. He became a "newspaper-reading animal," as an English visitor observed. This preoccupation with the news of the day drew attention away from literature of a more artistic and permanent kind. Thus, in one way, the newspapers handicapped literary development. Yet, in another way, they helped it, for they created a reading public and produced a potential market for literary works.

There was a more serious handicap to the rise of American authorship. An aspiring author found it hard to get his manuscript published, or to get it sold after it was in print. Until well into the nineteenth century, there were in America no book publishers in the modern sense, no firms that would bear the cost and take the risk of publishing. The author himself had to pay all or at least the larger part of the

expenses. He could find few printers willing to share the burden with him, for they could reprint the works of popular English authors without paying a royalty. No author in the young republic could support himself by means of his writing alone. The first to try it was the novelist Charles Brockden Brown. He produced a series of well-written horror stories but had to take a job as a magazine editor in order to supplement his income.

The American author, if he looked to periodicals or the theater for a market, did little if any better than with books. In the late eighteenth century, several magazines were published in the United States, the most important being the *Columbian*, the *American Museum*, the *Massachusetts Magazine*, and the *New-York Magazine*. All of these filled their pages chiefly by clipping material from English publications. Meanwhile the theater had grown into an accepted, permanent institution in American cities, with substantial buildings and regular schedules of performances. George Washington himself attended plays, and opposition to the theater as "the house of the devil" declined, though it by no means disappeared. But the American dramatist, like the writer of books and the contributor to magazines, had to compete with English authors, who did not have to be paid royalties.

Under the circumstances, it is surprising that the young republic contained so many able and active poets, essayists, novelists, and playwrights as it did. Among the most active poets and essayists were the "Hartford Wits," a group of Connecticut writers who met together for sociability and mutual encouragement. The leaders were Joel Barlow, Timothy Dwight, and John Trumbull (not to be confused with the contemporary painter of the same name). These men wrote epics on American greatness and satires on American foibles—as seen from a solid, Federalist, New England point of view. Barlow eventually went over to the Jeffersonian side, but the ablest and most thoroughgoing Jeffersonian poet, a hardy foe of the Hartford Wits, was Philip Freneau of New Jersey.

Novels became the rage in England during the last half of the eighteenth century, and their popularity spread to the United States, where the latest English successes were promptly imported, reprinted, and eagerly read. The most fashionable themes were sex and senti-

mentality, satire, and terror. When novelists finally appeared in America, they hoped to produce a native, original kind of fiction, but they had to appeal to the prevailing taste. They used essentially the same themes as the English novelists, though substituting American scenes and situations for English ones.

Most of the songs popular during and after the Revolution consisted of new and patriotic words set to familiar English tunes. "Yankee Doodle" was written during the French and Indian War by a British army surgeon with the intention of poking fun at the ragged colonial troops. It became a favorite with the Yankees themselves, and during the Revolution they added many variations, some of them unsuitable for polite company. Other popular music was written by Francis Hopkinson, the first notable American composer and a man of amazing versatility. The first student to be graduated from the College of Philadelphia, Hopkinson practiced law, served in the first Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence, wrote verse, essays, and Revolutionary pamphlets, painted, gave public performances on the harpsichord, and sat as a judge in Pennsylvania and federal courts, besides composing music. A collection of his best work was published under the title of *Seven Songs* (1788). His son, the eminent lawyer Joseph Hopkinson, wrote the words for "Hail, Columbia" during the undeclared war with France (1798); for many years, this stirring song remained the nearest equivalent to a national anthem.

## CHURCHES AND RELIGION

Americans of the young republic might have been patriotic enough but, from the point of view of many a religious leader, they were insufficiently pious. The religious excitement of the Great Awakening had passed, and sermons of the Revolutionary era lamented the "decay of vital piety," the "degeneracy of manners," and the luxurious growth of "vice."

Certainly large numbers of the people were turning away from familiar faiths. Many interested themselves in deism, the rational religion of Enlightenment philosophers, especially those in France. The deists believed in God but considered Him a rather remote being

who had created the universe, not an intimate presence who was concerned with human individuals and their sins. Franklin, Jefferson, and others among the Founding Fathers held deistic views. Such views, at first confined to the well educated, finally spread among the people at large. By 1800, books and articles attacking religious "superstitions" found eager readers all over the country. The most influential of such writings, Thomas Paine's *The Age of Reason* (1794-1796), was discussed in homes, colleges, taverns, stagecoaches, everywhere. Paine once declared that Christianity was the "strangest religion ever set up," for "it committed a murder upon Jesus in order to redeem mankind from the sin of eating an apple." No wonder the preachers regularly denounced Paine and deism and called for a new revival of religious faith.

While resisting the spread of free thought, the churches also had to deal with other problems. After the Declaration of Independence the groups with foreign ties had to reconsider their position, and even those without such ties faced the task of reorganizing on a national basis. As population moved westward, the churches had to follow the frontier if they were to grow with the country's growth. In responding to the challenges of the time, some denominations succeeded much better than others. New sects arose. The grim doctrines of Calvinism gave way to more optimistic faiths, and the religious pattern of the young republic became even more variegated than that of colonial America had been.

The Congregationalists, who led in numbers and influence at the close of the colonial period, soon lost their preeminence. They continued to be tax supported in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire even after those colonies were transformed into states. But the Congregationalists lacked the missionary zeal, appealing theology, and strong, centralized organization that were essential for winning and holding converts.

In New England, its home ground, the Congregational Church was weakened by the growing popularity of universalist and unitarian doctrines. Many of its members rejected not only the idea of predestination but also the idea of the Trinity. They believed that salvation was available to all, and that God was one (not three), Jesus being only a great religious teach-





#### A Camp Meeting

*Originating in 1800, the camp meeting soon became a popular American religious institution in rural areas, especially in the South and West. By 1820, about 1,000 meetings a year were held. The painting reproduced here was made in the 1830s. A typical camp meeting (in Maryland, in 1806) was described by a participant who wrote of the tents, the wagons, the plank seats, the covered stand for the preacher, and the daily schedule: "At day break the trumpets were blown round the camp for the people to rise 20 minutes afterward for family prayer at the door of every tent — if fair weather — at sunrise they blew at the stand for public prayer, and then breakfasted. At 10 o'clock they blew for preaching — by 2 o'clock dinner was to be over in every tent. At 3 o'clock preaching again, and again at night." After several days of this, "hundreds were prostrate upon the earth before the Lord. Will I ever see anything more like the day of Judgment on this side of eternity — to see the people running, yes, running, from every direction to the stand, weeping, shouting, and shouting for joy. Prayer was then made — and every Brother fell upon the neck of his Brother, and the Sisters did likewise. Then we parted. O' glorious day they went home singing and shouting." (Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society, New York City)*

er and not the son of God. The Universalist Church came into existence (1779) when believers in universal salvation began to hold meetings in Gloucester, Massachusetts. A little later the Unitarian Church was founded in Boston (1782).

American Presbyterians adopted a constitution (1789) by which the whole country was divided into sixteen presbyteries and four synods, with a general assembly that served as the highest ecclesiastical court. Already well entrenched on the frontier, where so many of the Scotch-Irish had settled before the Revolution,

the Church expanded with the expanding nation. Indeed, it grew too fast for the maintenance of internal harmony. Bickering reappeared between Old and New Lights, between traditional Calvinists and believers in salvation for all. New sects splintered off, as did the followers of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, who in the early 1800s rejected the Calvinist dogma of limited election. Later the Campbellites formed a separate church known as the Disciples of Christ.

Among the Baptists, as among the Presbyterians, there were disputes about the question

of predestination or free will, but theological differences did not prevent the Baptists from growing more rapidly than any other denomination except one (the Methodist) during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Scattered over the whole country, they were especially numerous in Virginia and the Carolinas. Long the most militant advocates of the separation of church and state, they ceased to impress others as dangerous radicals after this principle was adopted in the Virginia statute of religious liberty and in the federal Bill of Rights.

More than the Baptists or any other religious group, the Roman Catholics gained in prestige (though not in numbers) as a consequence of the Revolution. On the advice of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a Maryland statesman and Catholic lay leader, most of the Catholics in America supported the Patriot cause during the war. The French alliance brought Catholic troops and chaplains to this country. In such times as these, Catholic Americans no longer seemed, as in colonial days, like agents of the devil. After the war the Vatican provided for the United States a church government separate from that of England. In 1784 Father John Carroll was appointed head of Catholic missions in this country, and with the elaboration of the American hierarchy he was made the first American bishop (1789) and finally Archbishop of Baltimore (1808).

The Anglicans suffered more than any other religious group as a result of the Revolution. They were badly divided on the issues of the war, the clergy being mostly Loyalist in the states where Anglicans were few, and partly Loyalist in Virginia and Maryland. In these two states the Anglican Church had benefited from tax support, which was lost when the Church was disestablished. In other states the Church had depended upon aid from the mother country, and that aid was withdrawn. By the end of the war a large proportion of the parishes lacked clergymen, for there were few recruits to take the places of those who had died or had left the country as Loyalist refugees. Since there never had been an American bishop or an intercolonial organization of the Church, postwar Anglican leaders had to start from scratch in setting up an independent, national hierarchy. By 1789 they had succeeded in organizing the Protestant Episcopal Church. Until after the War of 1812 the Church re-

mained weak, gaining few members and losing many with the departure of the Methodists.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, did not set up a new church in England, nor did he intend to do so in America. In 1776, ten years after his lay ministers had begun to organize Methodist "classes" in the colonies, American Methodists insisted that they were not "common dissenters" but "a religious society in communion with the Church of England." But the war changed their attitude. When peace came, the greatest of Wesley's agents in America, Francis Asbury, concluded that American conditions required the formation of a separate body. In 1784 Asbury called a meeting of Methodist preachers at Baltimore, and launched the Methodist Church, with himself as the first bishop.

The Methodists had a unique and effective organization. It was authoritarian, with power concentrated at the top in the hands of the bishops. The preachers were itinerants: each of them had charge of several widely scattered congregations and rode the rounds from one to another. Every year the preachers met in a conference (by 1796 there were six annual conferences in different parts of the country) where a bishop conferred with them, ordained new ministers, and assigned all the riders to their circuits, making frequent changes. This system was well adapted to a growing, moving, frontier society. As the historian W. W. Sweet has said, the Presbyterian minister in the West "was called by the people," the Baptist farmer-preacher "came with the people," and the Methodist circuit-rider "was sent to the people." The circuit-rider brought a message of individual responsibility for eternal happiness. It was a welcome message. The Methodist Church, within sixty years after its foundation, became the largest in the United States.

Along with the Baptists and the Presbyterians, the Methodists gained many converts in the Second Awakening, a new wave of revivalism that swept the country at the turn of the century. This revivalism had two distinct phases. It began among the Presbyterians in certain colleges of the East and South, reaching its height at Yale under the leadership of President Timothy Dwight (1797-1817). Then, with zealous graduates carrying the evangelical spirit to the West, it went to even greater extremes on the frontier. In 1800, in Kentucky,

the Presbyterians held the first camp meeting, an outdoor revival that lasted several days. The Methodists soon took up the camp-meeting technique, and the circuit-rider Peter Cartwright won fame as the most effective soul-saver of all backwoods revivalists. The camp meeting was a Methodist "harvest time," as Bishop Asbury said. It became increasingly popular, the bishop noting with satisfaction in 1811 that 400 camp meetings were to be held that year. Crowds of sinners as well as salvation seekers attended these open-air get-togethers, and the atmosphere sometimes was far from churchlike. Many Presbyterians, especially Campbellites, came to frown on the camp meeting. Even Cartwright deplored the worst outbreaks of frenzy, when men and women

had fits, rolled in the dust, and lay twitching with the "holy jerks."

After 1800 the devil and the deists were on the run. Freethinkers by no means disappeared (the young Abraham Lincoln took up free thought in frontier Illinois), but they were put upon the defensive. The great majority of Americans subscribed to some variant of revealed Christianity, though it usually was not quite the same as the predominant faith of their forefathers. The churches in the nineteenth century placed more emphasis on the New Testament and the saving grace of Jesus and less emphasis on the Old Testament and the stern decrees of Jehovah than those of the seventeenth or even the eighteenth century had done.

## **Emerging Industrialism**

While religious patterns were changing, so were industrial techniques, even more fundamentally. A new technology was developing, which was to have profound effects upon the future of the United States.

### **SOME NEW TECHNOLOGY**

In part, the new technology came from England, where the Industrial Revolution was beginning at the time the American Revolution occurred. The essence of the Industrial Revolution was simply this: more rapidly and extensively than ever before, power-driven machines were taking the place of hand-operated tools. To tend the machines, workers were brought together in factories or mills located at the sources of power. New factory towns arose, with a new class of dependent laborers and another of millowners or industrial capitalists. The factory system was adapted most readily to the manufacture of cotton thread and cloth. In textile making, invention called forth invention. Improvements in weaving made necessary improvements in spinning so that the spinners could keep up with the weavers, and these improvements required new devices for carding, that is, combing and straightening the

fibers for the spinner. Water, wind, and animal power continued to be used but began to be supplemented and replaced by steam. This was especially true after the appearance of James Watt's steam engine (patented in 1769), which, though cumbersome and inefficient, was a great improvement upon Thomas Newcomen's earlier "atmospheric" engine.

Though Americans copied all they could from England, the Industrial Revolution in the United States was largely an indigenous growth, with roots extending far back into the colonial period.

When English imports were cut off by the prewar boycott and then by the Revolutionary War, desperate efforts were made to stimulate the manufacture of certain necessities in America. Homespun became both patriotic and fashionable, and to speed up the output of linens and woollens a few of the states gave loans or bounties for the making of wire for card teeth. Several of the states offered loans or bounties for the production of cannon, gunpowder, camp kettles, and other war material. Public efforts to encourage industry continued after the war, and to these a bit of tariff protection was added after the adoption of the Constitution. Private companies were formed, and one of these with Alexander Hamilton as a sponsor founded the town of Paterson, New Jersey

(1791), to exploit the available water power for manufacturing.

Still, the American textile industry lagged behind that of England. Capital was scarce in the United States, even after certain American shipowners began to invest some of their shipping profits in textile mills. For years, prospects of profit were dim because of the abundance of cheap English imports, and the machinery available remained inferior to the steadily progressing English inventions. To protect England's superior position as a manufacturing nation, the British government tried to prevent the export of textile machinery and the emigration of skilled mechanics. Nevertheless, a number of mechanics and millwrights made their way to the United States, the most impor-

tant of them being Samuel Slater. In 1790, with the aid of American mechanics, Slater built a spinning mill for the Quaker merchant Moses Brown at Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Though a few inferior spinning mills already were in operation, Slater's work is generally considered as the beginning of the factory system in America.

In textiles and in some other manufactured goods the young republic did not measure up to England. Americans generally produced the coarser kinds of yarn and cloth, and though they supplied their own needs in common metalware, they still imported the finer grades of cutlery and other metal products. Yet in certain respects American industry was neither imitative nor inferior, and some American inventors

#### **Slater Mill**

*Samuel Slater left England in the disguise of a farm boy, since English law prohibited the emigration of mechanics with a knowledge of textile machinery. At Pawtucket, Rhode Island in 1790, he designed what became the first successful cotton spinning mill in the United States. In 1815 he added facilities for weaving woolen cloth. This watercolor-and-ink drawing represents the Pawtucket bridge, falls, and mill as they were sometime between 1810 and 1819. (The Rhode Island Historical Society)*



and engineers were equal to the greatest in the world. They were especially advanced in certain new techniques of mass production.

One of the most ingenious mechanics of his time was Oliver Evans, a Delaware farmer's son. Evans invented a card-making machine, constructed an automatic flour mill, improved upon the steam engine, and combined theory and practice in America's first textbook of mechanical engineering, *The Young Mill-Wright's and Miller's Guide* (1795). In his flour mill, which he put into operation the same year the constitutional convention met (1787), all the work was done by a variety of machines geared to the same water wheel. Only two men were needed. At one end of the mill a man emptied bags of wheat, and at the other end a man closed and rolled away barrels full of flour. Here was history's first continuous automatic production line, the beginning of automation.

Another pioneer in mass production was the Massachusetts-born, Yale-educated Eli Whitney. He is best known for the cotton gin, but he is even more important for the revolution he accomplished in the manufacture of guns.

The rise of the textile industry in England and America created a tremendous demand for the cotton that planters had begun to grow in the American South. But the planters were faced with the problem of separating the seeds from the cotton fast enough to meet the demand. There was a variety of cotton with smooth black seeds and long fibers that were easily cleaned, but this "long-staple" or "sea-island" variety could be grown successfully only along the coast or on the offshore islands of Georgia and South Carolina. There was also a short-staple cotton that could be raised almost anywhere in the South, but its sticky green seeds were very difficult to remove, a skilled slave being able to clean no more than a few pounds a day by hand. The planters were casting about for a machine or "gin" (that is, an engine) to clean the short-staple cotton when Whitney, then serving as a tutor on the Georgia plantation of General Nathanael Greene's widow, made his famous invention in 1793.

The gin was quite simple. A toothed roller caught the fibers of the cotton boll and pulled them between the wires of a grating, which held back the seeds, and a revolving brush

removed the lint from the roller's teeth. But the gin had momentous consequences. With it, one slave could clean cotton as fast as several could by hand. Soon cotton growing spread into the upland South, and within a decade the total crop increased eightfold. Slavery, which with the decline of tobacco production had become a dying institution, was now revived, expanded, and firmly fixed upon the South.

During the undeclared war with France (1798–1800) all-out war was expected, and so the army needed many thousands of muskets in a hurry. Muskets then were made one at a time, and no two of them exactly alike, by skilled gunsmiths. There were not enough gunsmiths, and there was not enough time to meet the army's anticipated need. But Whitney had a plan. He made a contract with the government for the delivery of 10,000 muskets within two years. He designed a machine to make each of the parts exactly according to a pattern. Then all he had to do was to assemble the guns. This was the beginning of standardized quantity production through the manufacture of interchangeable parts. Before long, the same system was used for making clocks, and eventually it was applied to sewing machines and many other complicated products.

By fastening cotton and slavery upon the South, Whitney's gin contributed to the coming of the Civil War. His techniques of mass production, by building up the industrial strength of the North, helped the Union to win the war that the gin did so much to bring on. Such were some of the aftereffects of the industrial developments in the period of the young republic. There were also other political and social consequences of the changes then just getting under way. In America as in England, though somewhat more slowly, the Industrial Revolution created new classes and class conflicts, hastened the growth of crowded manufacturing towns, and gave rise to troublesome political issues, such as the perennial issue of the protective tariff.

## TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE

Before the full potential of the Industrial Revolution could be realized in the United States, transportation had to be improved. What was needed was a system of roads and waterways

**Fulton's  
Famous  
Voyage  
[1807]**

In August, 1807, Robert Fulton wrote this letter to his friend Joel Barlow, a diplomat and poet, one of the group of authors known as the "Hartford Wits"

*My steamboat voyage to Albany and back has turned out rather more favourable than I had calculated. The distance from New York to Albany is 150 miles; I ran it up in thirty-two hours, and down in thirty hours; the latter is just five miles an hour. I had a light breeze against me the whole way going and coming, so that no use was made of my sails, and the voyage has been performed wholly by the power of the steam engine. I overtook many sloops and schooners beating to windward, and passed them as if they had been at anchor.*

*The power of propelling boats by steam is now fully proved. The morning I left New York, there were not perhaps thirty persons in the city who believed that the boat would ever move one mile an hour, or be of the least utility; and while we were putting off from the wharf, which was crowded with spectators, I heard a number of sarcastic remarks. This is the way, you know, in which ignorant men compliment what they call philosophers and projectors.*

*Having employed much time, and money and zeal, in accomplishing this work, it gives me, as it will you, great pleasure to see it so fully answer my expectations. It will give a cheap and quick conveyance to merchandise on the Mississippi and Missouri, and other great rivers, which are now laying open their treasures to the enterprise of our countrymen. And although the prospect of personal emolument has been some inducement to me, yet I feel infinitely more pleasure in reflecting with you on the immense advantage that my country will derive from the invention.*

that would connect all parts of the country and create a market extensive enough to justify production on a reasonably large scale. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, goods still moved far more cheaply by water than by land. For the Atlantic seaports, ocean commerce with other continents was more easily carried on than overland trade with American settlements west of the Appalachian range. As Charles and Mary Beard have written, "the streets of London, the quays of Lisbon, and the Hong of Canton were more familiar sights to the merchants of the coast than were the somber forests and stump-studded clearings of Western America."

Temporarily, the Revolutionary War unsettled merchant shipping, as the British navy drove American merchantmen and fishing vessels from the seas. But, before the war was over, Americans learned to evade the enemy with light, fast, maneuverable ships. Indeed, the Yankees began to prey upon British commerce with hundreds of privateers. For many a

shipowner, privateering proved to be more profitable than ordinary peacetime trade

When, in 1785, the *Empress of China* returned to New York from Canton, she brought back a cargo of silk and tea, which yielded a fabulous profit. Within five years Yankee ships were trading regularly with the Far East. Generally these ships carried various manufactured goods around Cape Horn to California, exchanged them for hides and furs, and with these proceeded on across the Pacific, to barter them in China.

Not only in China but also in Europe and the Near East enterprising Yankees from Salem and other ports sought out every possible opportunity for commerce. These Yankees were aided by two acts of the new Congress (1789) giving preference in tariff rates and port duties to homeowned ships. American shipping was greatly stimulated (despite the loss of ships and cargoes seized by the belligerents) by the outbreak of European war in the 1790s. Yankee vessels took over most of the carrying

trade between Europe and the European colonies in the Western Hemisphere.

As early as 1793, the young republic had come to possess a merchant marine and a foreign trade larger than those of any other country except England. In proportion to its population, the United States had more ships and commerce than any other nation in the world. And the shipping business was growing fast. Between 1789 and 1810 the total tonnage of American vessels engaged in overseas traffic rose from less than 125,000 to nearly 1 million. The country's exports carried in American ships increased from 30 to 90 percent, and imports from 17.5 to 93 percent.

Transportation and trade within the United States labored under handicaps, but improvements were steadily being made. In river transportation a new era began with the development of the steamboat. Oliver Evans' high-pressure engine, lighter and more efficient than James Watt's, made steam more feasible for powering boats as well as mill machinery and eventually the locomotive. Even before the high-pressure engine was available, a number of inventors experimented with steam-powered craft, and John Fitch exhibited to some of the delegates at the constitutional convention a forty-five-foot vessel with paddles operated by steam. The perfecting of the steamboat was chiefly the work of the inventor Robert Fulton and the promoter Robert R. Livingston. Their *Clermont*, equipped with paddle wheels and an English-built engine, voyaged up the Hudson in the summer of 1807, demonstrating the practicability of steam navigation even though taking thirty hours to go 150 miles. In 1811 a partner of Livingston's, Nicholas J. Roosevelt, introduced the steamboat to the West by sending the *New Orleans* from Pittsburgh down the Ohio and Mississippi. The next year this vessel entered upon a profitable career of fairly regular service between New Orleans and Natchez.

Meanwhile, in land transportation, the turnpike era had begun. In 1792 a corporation constructed a toll road the sixty miles from Philadelphia to Lancaster, with a hard-packed surface of crushed rock. This venture proved so successful that similar turnpikes (so named from the kind of tollgate frequently used) were laid out from other cities to neighboring towns. Since the turnpikes were built and operated

for private profit, construction costs had to be low enough and the prospective traffic heavy enough to assure an early and ample return. Therefore these roads, radiating from Eastern cities, ran for comparatively short distances and through rather thickly settled areas. If similar highways were to be extended over the mountains, the state governments or the federal government would have to finance the construction, at least in part.

## CITY AND COUNTRY

The young republic was a land of remarkable diversity—in learning, in literary tastes, in religion, and in economic and social development. Much of the country remained a wilderness, yet its leading cities ranked in size and urban sophistication with the largest of England and Europe, except for such national capitals as London and Paris. The United States had no comparable capital of politics, science, literature, and art.

The total population rose from less than 4 million by the first census (1790) to well over 5 million by the second (1800). At this time, only three people in a hundred lived in towns of more than 8,000. Ten in a hundred lived west of the Appalachian Mountains. Though Virginia was still the most populous of the states, it contained none of the largest cities. Philadelphia (70,000) ranked first; New York (60,000) was close behind; and next in order were Baltimore (26,000), Boston (24,000), and Charleston (20,000).

Washington City, the newly founded national capital, was only a raw and straggling village, the entire District of Columbia containing no more than 3,200 people. Its broad but unpaved avenues radiated from the uncompleted Capitol and the President's house in accordance with the elaborate plan of the French architect, P. C. L'Enfant. This small town provided a new focus for the growing nationalism of Americans, and it symbolized their grand hopes for the future of their country. President Adams and his wife Abigail, sacrificing the comforts and attractions of Philadelphia, moved to Washington in 1800. And here President-elect Jefferson was inaugurated the following year.

## Jefferson in Power

Long afterward Jefferson referred to his party's victory as "the revolution of 1800," but in his inaugural address of 1801, trying to sweeten the bitterness of the recent campaign, he emphasized the common principles of the two parties while restating the principles of his own. Noting that the country was separated by a wide ocean from the "devastating havoc" of the European war, he recommended a foreign

policy of "peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none" — much as George Washington had done in his Farewell Address. With respect to domestic affairs, Jefferson proposed a "wise and frugal government" that would leave men free to "regulate their own pursuits of industry." Yet he also favored the "encouragement of agriculture and of commerce as its handmaid."

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### The Unfinished Capitol, 1800

*When Jefferson was inaugurated as President, the magnificent plan for the federal city of Washington still remained for the most part on paper. Two edifices had appeared in the Maryland woods — the president's "palace" and the new Capitol, with one wing completed. These two centers of government, about a mile and a half apart, were connected by Pennsylvania Avenue, a muddy road cut through swamps, and by a stone sidewalk bordering the avenue. Stonecutters are still busy in this view of the Capitol's east front. From a contemporary watercolor. (Library of Congress)*





## Jefferson's First Inaugural [1801]

*We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men fear that a republican government can not be strong, that this Government is not strong enough, but would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm on the theoretic and visionary fear that this Government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest Government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man can not be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.*

### PRESIDENT AND PARTY LEADER

From the outset Jefferson acted in a spirit of democratic simplicity, which was quite in keeping with the frontierlike character of the raw city of Washington, but which was very different from the ceremonial splendor of former Federalist administrations in the metropolis of Philadelphia. He walked like an ordinary citizen to and from his inauguration at the capital, instead of riding in a coach at the head of a procession. In the presidential mansion he disregarded the courtly etiquette of his predecessors, widower that he was, without a First Lady to take charge of social affairs. At state dinners, adopting the "rule of pell-mell," he let his guests scramble for places at the table. He did not always bother to dress up, and the fastidious minister from Great Britain complained of being received by the President in slippers that were down at the heels, and coat and pantaloons that were "indicative of utter slovenliness and indifference to appearances."

Even at his best, the tall, freckle-faced sandy-haired Jefferson did not make a very impressive appearance, what with his shyness, his awkward posture, and his shambling gait. Yet, though a rather ineffective public speaker, he charmed his guests in conversation and he wrote with greater literary skill than any President before or since, with the possible exceptions of Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson. More than that, he was a genius with a

wider diversity of talents than any other President, without exception. Besides being a politician and a diplomat, he was an architect, educator, inventor, scientific farmer, and philosopher-scientist, who diverted himself with such pastimes as sorting the bones of prehistoric animals. As a shrewd and practical politician, he was excelled by no other President, though he was equaled by Lincoln and by Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Jefferson was a strong executive, but neither his principles nor his nature inclined him to dictate to Congress. To avoid even the semblance of dictation, and to indulge his distaste for public speaking, he decided not to deliver his messages to Congress in person as Presidents Washington and Adams had done. Instead, he submitted his messages in writing, thus setting a precedent that was followed for more than a century, until President Wilson revived the practice of addressing Congress in person. Yet Jefferson, as party leader, gave direction to his fellow partisans among the senators and representatives, by quiet and sometimes by rather devious means.

To his cabinet he appointed a group of Republicans who were like-minded with him but were more than mere yes-men. Two of the ablest were the Secretary of State, James Madison, and the Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin. Madison, Jefferson's long-time neighbor and friend, continued to be so close a collaborator that, throughout Jefferson's presi-

dency, it is hard to tell how much of the impetus to policy came from the President himself and how much from the Secretary of State, particularly in foreign affairs. Gallatin, born in Switzerland, his speech marked by a French accent, was as able a public financier as the great Hamilton had been and was, in addition, a thoroughgoing democrat, who at the time of the Whiskey Rebellion had used his talents as a lawyer to defend the tax-resisting farmers of the Pennsylvania frontier.

Jefferson used patronage as a political weapon. Like Washington before him, he believed that federal offices should be filled with men loyal to the principles and policies of the administration. True, he did not attempt a sudden and drastic removal of Federalist officeholders, possibly because of assurances to the contrary that had been given in his name when Federalist votes in Congress were needed to break the tie with Burr. Yet, at every convenient opportunity, he replaced the holdovers from the Adams administration with his own trusted followers. By the end of his first term about half the government jobs, and by the end of his second term practically all of them, were held by good Republicans. The President punished Burr and the Burrists by withholding patronage from them; he never forgave the man whom he believed guilty of plotting to frustrate the intentions of the party and the ambitions of its rightful candidate.

A tie vote between the presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the same party could not occur again. The Twelfth Amendment, added to the Constitution in 1804 before the election of that year, by implication recognized the function of political parties; it stipulated that the electors should vote for President and Vice President as separate and distinct candidates. Burr had no chance to run on the ticket with Jefferson a second time. In place of Burr, the congressional caucus of Republicans nominated his New York factional foe, George Clinton. The Federalist nominee, C. C. Pinckney, made a poor showing against the popular Jefferson, who carried even the New England states except Connecticut and was reelected by the overwhelming electoral majority of 162 to 14, while the Republican membership of both houses of Congress was increased.

During his second term Jefferson lost some of his popularity, and he had to deal with a revolt within the party ranks. His brilliant but

erratic relative John Randolph of Roanoke, the House leader, turned against him, accused him of acting like a Federalist instead of a state-rights Republican, and mustered a handful of anti-Jefferson factionalists who called themselves "Quids."

Randolph became a fanatic on the subject of the Yazoo land claims. These arose from the action of the Georgia legislature, which, before ceding its territorial rights to the federal government, had made and then canceled a grant of millions of acres along the Mississippi to the Yazoo Land Companies. Jefferson favored a compromise settlement that would have satisfied both the state of Georgia and the Yazoo investors, many of whom were Northern Republicans whose support he needed. But Randolph, insisting that the claims were fraudulent, charged the President and the President's friends with complicity in corruption. A number of Randolph's colleagues in Congress were investors in the land companies or supporters of their claims, and time and again the tall, skinny Virginian would point his bony finger at one or another of these men and shriek "Yazoo!" He prevented the government from making any settlement of the question until after both he and Jefferson were out of office.

Randolph had a special antipathy toward Madison, whom he considered as one of the worst of the Yazoo men. He did all he could, which was not enough, to prevent Madison's nomination for the presidency in 1808. Jefferson refused to consider a third term for himself, for he was opposed to it in principle, unlike Washington, who had declined to run again in 1796 only because he was weary of public office. Jefferson's refusal established a tradition against a third term for any President, a tradition that remained unbroken until Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected for a third time in 1940 (and then for a fourth time in 1944). Though unwilling himself to be a candidate in 1808, Jefferson was determined that his alter ego, Madison, should succeed him and carry on his policies without a break.

## CONFLICT WITH THE COURTS

The Federalists had used the courts as a means of strengthening their party and persecuting the opposition, or so it seemed to the Republicans, and soon after Jefferson's first inaugura-

**Marbury v.  
Madison  
[1803]**

Chief Justice Marshall:

*It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is. Those who apply the rule to particular cases must of necessity expound and interpret that rule. If two laws conflict with each other, the courts must decide on the operation of each.*

*So if a law be in opposition to the constitution: if both the law and the constitution apply to a particular case, so that the court must either decide that case conformably to the law, disregarding the constitution, or conformably to the constitution, disregarding the law, the court must determine which of these conflicting rules governs the case. This is of the very essence of judicial duty.*

*If, then, the courts are to regard the constitution, and the constitution is superior to any ordinary act of the legislature, the constitution, and not such ordinary act, must govern the case to which they both apply.*

tion his followers in Congress launched a counterattack against the Federalist-dominated judiciary. They repealed the Naturalization Act, changing the residence period for citizenship of foreigners from fourteen to five years, and they allowed the hated Alien and Sedition Acts to expire. Then they repealed the Judiciary Act of 1801, abolishing the new circuit courts and arranging for each of the Supreme Court justices to sit with a district judge on circuit duty. As President, Jefferson did not have the power to remove Adams' "midnight appointees" from their newly created jobs, but Congress achieved the same object by pulling their benches out from under them, despite Federalist protests that the repeal violated the constitutional provision that judges should hold office during good behavior for life.

In the debate on the question of the Judiciary Act of 1801 the Federalists maintained that the Supreme Court had the power of reviewing acts of Congress and disallowing those that conflicted with the Constitution. The Constitution itself said nothing about such a power of judicial review, but Hamilton in one of *The Federalist* papers had argued that the Supreme Court should have the power, and the Court actually had exercised it as early as 1796, though upholding the law of Congress then in question. In 1803, in the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, the Court for the first time declared a congressional act, or part of one, unconstitutional. (Not for more than half a century, in the *Dred Scott* case of 1857, did the Court do so a second time.)

William Marbury, one of President Adams' "midnight appointments," had been named as a justice of the peace in the District of Columbia, but his commission, though duly signed and sealed, had not been delivered to him at the time Adams left the presidency. Madison, as Jefferson's secretary of state, refused to hand over the commission, and so Marbury applied to the Supreme Court for an order (writ of mandamus) directing Madison to perform his official duty.

The Chief Justice of the United States was John Marshall, a leading Federalist and prominent lawyer of Virginia, whom President Adams had appointed in 1801. (For the remainder of Adams' term, Marshall had continued to serve also as secretary of state. It was he himself who, in that capacity, had neglected to see that Marbury's commission was delivered.) Marshall never forgot his experiences with Washington's army during the Revolution. Having shared the sufferings at Valley Forge, he retained a vivid impression of the evils of a weak, divided, and inefficient form of government. As chief justice, he did his best to give the government unity and strength.

In the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, Marshall decided that Marbury had a right to the commission but that the Court had no power to issue the order. True, the original Judiciary Act of 1789 had conferred such a power upon the Court, but, said Marshall, the powers of the Court had been defined in the Constitution itself, and Congress could not rightfully enlarge them. Marshall did not claim, however, that

only the federal judges could decide what the Constitution meant; he implied that each of the three branches of the federal government could decide for itself. In delivering his opinion, he went out of his way to discredit the Jefferson administration, yet shrewdly avoided an open conflict. Since he decided the immediate question (whether Madison should be ordered to deliver Marbury's commission) in Madison's favor, the administration had no opportunity to defy the Chief Justice by disobeying his decision.

While the case of *Marbury v. Madison* was still pending, President Jefferson prepared for a renewed assault upon that Federalist stronghold, the judiciary. If he could not remove the most obnoxious of the judges directly, perhaps he could do so indirectly through the process of impeachment. According to the Constitution, the House of Representatives was empowered to bring impeachment charges against any civil officer for "high crimes and misdemeanors," and the Senate sitting as a court was authorized to try the officer on the charges. Jefferson sent evidence to the House to show that one of the district judges, John Pickering of New Hampshire, was unfit for his position. The House accordingly impeached him, and the Senate, despite his obvious insanity, found him guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors. He was removed.

Later the Republicans went after bigger game, one of the justices of the Supreme Court itself. Justice Samuel Chase, a rabidly partisan Federalist, had applied the Sedition Act with seeming brutality and had delivered political speeches from the bench, insulting President Jefferson and denouncing the Jeffersonian doctrine of equal liberty and equal rights. In doing so, Chase was guilty of no high crime or misdemeanor in the constitutional sense, and he was only saying what thousands of Federalists believed. Some of the Republicans came to the conclusion, however, that impeachment should not be viewed merely as a criminal proceeding, and that a judge could properly be impeached for political reasons—for obstructing the other branches of the government and disregarding the will of the people. As for Justice Chase, he could easily be shown to be out of step with Congress, the President, and public opinion, especially after the overwhelming victory of the Republicans in the election of 1804.

At Jefferson's own suggestion, the House of Representatives set up a committee to investigate Chase's conduct. Impeached on the basis of the committee's findings, the justice was brought to trial before the Senate early in 1805. Jefferson did his best to secure a conviction, even temporarily cultivating the friendship of Aaron Burr, who as Vice President presided over the trial. But Burr performed his duties with aloof impartiality, and John Randolph as the impeachment manager bungled the prosecution for the House of Representatives. A majority of the senators finally voted for conviction, but not the necessary two-thirds majority. Chase was acquitted.

From the Republican point of view, the Pickering and Chase impeachments, though only half successful, did considerable good, for they caused the federal judges as a whole to be more discreet and less partisan in statements from the bench. If the Republicans had succeeded in getting rid of Chase, they might have been emboldened to take action against the Chief Justice himself. As things stood, Marshall remained secure in his position, and the political duel between the Chief Justice and the President continued.

## DOLLARS AND SHIPS

According to the Republicans, the administrations of Washington and Adams had been extravagant. Yearly expenditures had risen so much that by 1800 they were almost three times as high as they had been in 1793, and the public debt also had grown, though not so fast, since revenues had increased considerably. A part of these revenues came from internal taxation, including the hated whiskey excise. In 1802 the Republicans in Congress abolished the whole system of internal taxes, leaving customs duties and land sales as practically the only sources of revenue. Despite the tax cut, the new administration was determined to reduce the public debt by economizing on federal expenses. Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin proceeded to carry out a drastic retrenchment plan, scrimping as much as possible on expenditures for the ordinary operations of the government and effecting what Jefferson called a "chaste reformation" in the army and the navy. The tiny army of 4,000 men was reduced to only 2,500. The navy was pared down from twenty-

five ships in commission to seven, and the number of officers and men was cut accordingly.

These reductions in the armed forces reflected other Jeffersonian principles as well as the desire for government economy. Jefferson feared that anything except the smallest of standing armies might become a menace to civil liberties and to civilian control of government. He believed that the navy, while no such threat to the principle of civilian supremacy, was likely to be misused as a means of forcing the expansion of overseas commerce, which he thought should be kept subordinate to agriculture. Yet, though he once said "peace is our passion," Jefferson was far from being a pacifist fanatic. He desired an efficient if small military force, and his administration deserves credit for founding the United States Military Academy at West Point (1802). He also contributed to the efficiency of the navy, even while reducing the size of it, for most of the decommissioned ships were outmoded, and many of the discharged officers were incompetent. And, in spite of himself, he was compelled to reverse his small-navy policy and build up the fleet because of trouble with pirates in the Mediterranean.

For years the Barbary states of North Africa—Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli—had made piracy a national enterprise. They demanded protection money from all nations whose ships sailed the Mediterranean, and even the mistress of the seas, Great Britain, gave regular contributions (she did not particularly desire to eliminate the racket, since it hurt her naval rivals and maritime competitors more seriously than it did her). During the

1780s and 1790s the United States agreed to treaties providing for annual tribute to Morocco and the rest, and from time to time the Adams administration ransomed American sailors who had been captured by the corsairs and were being held as slaves. Jefferson doubted the wisdom of continuing the appeasement policy. "Tribute or war is the usual alternative of these Barbary pirates," he said. "Why not build a navy and decide on war?"

The decision was not left to Jefferson. In 1801 the Pasha of Tripoli, dissatisfied with the American response to his extortionate demands, had the flagpole of the American consulate chopped down, that being his way of declaring war on the United States. Jefferson concluded that, as President, he had a constitutional right to defend the United States without a war declaration by Congress, and he sent a squadron to the relief of the ships already at the scene. Not until 1803, however, was the fleet in the Mediterranean strong enough to take effective action, under Commodores Edward Preble and Samuel Barron. In 1805 the Pasha, by threatening to kill captive Americans, compelled Barron to agree to a peace that ended the payment of tribute but exacted a large ransom (\$60,000) for the release of the prisoners. This was hardly a resounding victory for the United States.

Though the war in Tripoli cost money, Secretary Gallatin pressed on with his plan for diminishing the public debt. He was aided by an unexpected increase in tariff revenues. By the time Jefferson left office, the debt had been cut almost in half (from \$83 million to \$45 million), despite the expenditure of \$15 million to buy Louisiana from Napoleon Bonaparte.

## **Doubling the National Domain**

### **JEFFERSON AND NAPOLEON**

In the year that Jefferson was elected President of the United States, Napoleon made himself dictator of France with the title of First Consul, and in the year that Jefferson was re-elected, Napoleon assumed the name and authority of Emperor. These two men, the democrat and the dictator, had little in common, yet they were good friends in international politics until Napoleon's ambitions leaped from Europe to America and brought about an estrangement.

Napoleon failed in a grandiose plan to seize the British Empire in India, though he succeeded in the conquest of Italy. Then he was reminded that France at one time had possessed a vast empire of her own in North America. In 1763 her possessions east of the Mississippi had gone to Great Britain, and those west of it to Spain. The former were lost for good, but the latter might be recovered. In 1800 (on the very day

after the signing of the peace settlement with the United States) Napoleon arranged for Spain to cede these possessions to him in the secret treaty of San Ildefonso. Thus he got title to Louisiana, which included roughly the whole of the Mississippi Valley to the west of the river, plus New Orleans to the east of the river near its mouth. He intended Louisiana to form the continental heartland of his proposed empire.

Other essential parts of his empire-to-be were the sugar-rich and strategically valuable West Indian islands which still belonged to France—Guadeloupe, Martinique, and above all Santo Domingo. Unfortunately for his plans, the slaves on Santo Domingo had been inspired by the French Revolution to rise in revolt and create a republic of their own, under the leadership of the remarkable Negro, Toussaint L'Ouverture. Taking advantage of a truce in his war with England, Napoleon sent to the West Indies an army led by his brother-in-law, Charles Leclerc, to put down the insurrection and restore French authority.

Meanwhile, unaware of Napoleon's ultimate aim, Jefferson pursued the kind of foreign policy that was to be expected of such a well-known friend of France. He appointed as the American minister to Paris the ardently pro-French Robert R. Livingston. Continuing and hastening the peace policy of Adams, he carried through the ratification of the Franco-American settlement of 1800 and put it into effect even before it was ratified. With respect to Santo Domingo, however, he did not continue the policy of Adams, who had cooperated with the British in recognizing and supporting the rebel regime of Toussaint. Jefferson assured the French minister in Washington that the American people, especially those of the slave-holding states, did not approve of the Negro revolutionary who was setting a bad example for their own slaves. He even led the French minister to believe that the United States would join with France in putting down the rebellion.

Jefferson began to reappraise the whole subject of American relations with France when he heard rumors of the secret retrocession of Louisiana. "It completely reverses all the political relations of the U.S.," he wrote to Minister Livingston (April 18, 1802). Always before, we had looked to France as our "natural friend." But there was on the earth "one

single spot" the possessor of which was "our natural and habitual enemy." That spot was New Orleans, the outlet through which the produce of the fast-growing West was shipped to the markets of the world. If France should actually take and hold New Orleans, Jefferson said, then "we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation."

Jefferson was even more alarmed when, in the fall of 1802, he learned that the Spanish intendant in charge at New Orleans had prohibited Americans from continuing to deposit their goods at that port for transshipment from river craft to ocean-going vessels. By the Pinckney Treaty (of 1795) Spain had guaranteed to Americans the right to deposit either at New Orleans or at some other suitable place. Without such a right, Spain's permission to use the lower Mississippi was of little value to the United States.

Westerners suspected, as did Jefferson himself, that Napoleon had procured the closing of the river for sinister purposes of his own. They demanded that something be done to reopen the river, and some of the more extreme among them clamored for war with France, the supposed source of all their troubles. The Federalists of the Northeast, though they had no real concern for the welfare of the West, played upon the discontent of the frontiersmen and encouraged the war cry for political reasons. The more the Federalists could arouse the West, the more they could embarrass the Jefferson administration. The President faced a dilemma. If he yielded to the frontier clamor and sought satisfaction through force, he would run the risk of renewed war with France. If, on the other hand, he disregarded the clamor, he would stand to lose the political support of the West.

There was possibly a way out of the dilemma, and that was to purchase from Napoleon the port so indispensable to the United States. Or, assuming that the First Consul should prove unwilling to sell New Orleans, and assuming also that he had acquired East and West Florida along with Louisiana in the secret treaty with Spain, it might be possible to obtain from him all or part of the Floridas, or at least the rights of navigation and deposit on some river flowing into the Gulf of Mexico to the east of New Orleans. Jefferson did not think of trying to buy any part of Louisiana to the west

of the Mississippi; he was content, for the time being, to let that river form the boundary between the French empire and the United States. Soon after hearing rumors of the Louisiana retrocession, he instructed Livingston in Paris to negotiate for the purchase of New Orleans, and Livingston on his own authority proceeded to suggest to the French that they might be glad to be rid of the upper part of Louisiana as well.

Jefferson also induced Congress to provide an army and a river fleet, and he allowed the impression to get out that American forces, despite his own desire for peace, might soon descend upon New Orleans. Then he sent a special envoy to work with Livingston in persuading the French to sell. For this extraordinary mission he chose an ideally suited man, James Monroe, who was well remembered in France and who, at the same time, had the confidence of the American frontiersmen; his appointment would reassure them that the President was looking after their interests. Jefferson told Monroe that if he and Livingston could not obtain even the minimum needs of the United States—even the use of the Mississippi or some other river emptying into the Gulf—they were to cross the Channel to England and there discuss some kind of understanding with the British government. Whether Jefferson, in his hints at an attack on New Orleans and an alliance with Great Britain, merely meant to bluff the French, he had no chance to show. While Monroe's coach was still rumbling on its way to Paris, Napoleon suddenly made up his mind to dispose of the entire Louisiana Territory.

Startling though this decision seemed to some of his advisers, Napoleon had good reasons for it. His plans for an American empire had gone awry partly because of certain mischances, which might be summarized in two words—*mosquitoes* and *ice*. The mosquitoes brought yellow fever and death to General Leclerc and to thousands of the soldiers whom Napoleon had sent to reconquer Santo Domingo. The ice, forming earlier than expected in a Dutch harbor as winter came in 1802, delayed the departure of an expeditionary force that Napoleon was readying to reinforce Leclerc's army and also to take possession of Louisiana. By the spring of 1803 it was too late. Napoleon then was expecting a renewal of the European

war, and he feared that he would not be able to hold Louisiana if the British, with their superior naval power, should attempt to take it. He also realized that, quite apart from the British threat, there was danger from the United States: he could not prevent the Americans, who were pushing steadily into the Mississippi Valley, from sooner or later overrunning Louisiana.

## THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Napoleon left the negotiations over Louisiana to his finance minister, Barbé-Marbois, rather than his foreign minister, Talleyrand, since Talleyrand was remembered for the X. Y. Z. Affair and was distrusted by Americans, while Barbé-Marbois had their respect, having lived for some time in the United States and having married an American girl. Livingston and Monroe, after the latter's arrival in Paris, had to decide first of all whether they should even consider making a treaty for the purchase of the entire Louisiana Territory, since they had not been authorized by their government to do so. They dared not wait until they could get new instructions from home, for Napoleon in the meantime might change his mind as suddenly as he had made it up. They decided to go ahead, realizing that Jefferson could reject their treaty if he disapproved what they had done. After a little haggling over the price that Barbé-Marbois asked—and he asked and got somewhat more than Napoleon's minimum—Livingston and Monroe put their signatures to the treaty, on April 30, 1803.

By the terms of the purchase arrangement, the United States was to pay 60 million francs directly to the French government and up to 20 million more to American citizens who held claims against France for ship seizures in the past—or a total of approximately \$15 million. The United States was also to give France certain commercial privileges in the port of New Orleans, privileges not extended to other countries. Moreover, the United States was to incorporate the people of Louisiana into the Union and grant them as soon as possible the same rights and privileges as other citizens. This seemed to imply that the Louisiana inhabitants were to have the benefits of statehood in the near future. The boundaries were not defined,



**The United States at the Time of the Louisiana Purchase**

Louisiana being transferred to the United States simply with the "same extent" as when owned by France and earlier by Spain. When Livingston and Monroe appealed to Talleyrand for his opinion about the boundary, he merely replied "You have made a noble bargain for yourselves, and I suppose you will make the most of it."

In Washington, the President was both pleased and embarrassed when he received the treaty. He was glad to get such a "noble bargain," but, according to his oft-repeated views on the Constitution, the United States lacked the constitutional power to accept the bargain. In the past he had always insisted that the federal government could rightfully exer-





might be long delayed or possibly defeated, and they assured him that he already possessed all the constitutional power he needed. the President with the consent of the Senate obviously could make treaties, and the treaty-making power would justify the purchase of Louisiana. Years afterward (in 1828) the Supreme Court upheld this view, but Jefferson—strict constructionist that he had been—continued to have doubts about it. Finally he gave in, trusting, as he said, “that the good sense of our country will correct the evil of loose construction when it shall produce ill effects.” Thus, by implication, he left the question of constitutional interpretation to public opinion, and he cut the ground from under his doctrine of state rights.

When Jefferson called Congress into special session, a few of the die-hard Federalists of New England raised constitutional and other objections to the treaty, but the Senate promptly gave its consent and the House soon passed the necessary appropriation bill. The Spanish minister in Washington protested to Secretary Madison that the transaction was illegal, since Napoleon when acquiring Louisiana had promised never to part with it and also had agreed to provide an Italian kingdom for the son of the Spanish king but had never done so. Madison easily disposed of the protest by reminding the Spanish minister that the latter once had advised the United States to apply to France, not Spain, in response to a query whether Spain would be willing to sell a part of Louisiana.

Though Madison and Jefferson had a good case for the American title to Louisiana itself, they had considerably less justification when, taking advantage of the vagueness of the boundaries, they also claimed part of West Florida as American by virtue of the treaty with France. The Spaniards denied that any of Florida was included in Louisiana, and indeed the two provinces had had separate histories and had been separately administered. To persuade the Spaniards to give up Florida, Jefferson tried both promises of money and threats of force. Despite John Randolph’s outraged opposition, the President obtained from Congress an appropriation for secret purposes, one of which was to bribe France to bring pressure upon Spain. It was no use. All of Florida remained in Spanish hands until after Jefferson left the presidency.

cise only those powers assigned to it in so many words, and nowhere did the Constitution say anything about the acquisition of new territory. Now he thought, at first, that an amendment should be adopted to give the government the specific right to buy additional land; he even went so far as to draft a suitable amendment. But his advisers cautioned him that ratification

When the United States concluded the purchase treaty with France, Spain was still administering Louisiana, the French never having taken actual possession. They did not take possession until late in 1803, and then only to turn the territory over to General James Wilkinson, the commissioner of the United States and the commander of a small occupation force. In New Orleans, beneath a bright December sun, the recently raised French tricolor was brought down and the Stars and Stripes run up. For the time being, Louisiana Territory was given a semimilitary government with officials appointed by the President; later it was organized on the general pattern of the Northwest Territory, with the assumption that it would be divided into states. The first of these was admitted to the Union as the state of Louisiana in 1812.

### EXPLORING THE WEST

Meanwhile the geography of the far-flung territory was revealed by a series of explorations. Even before he became President, Jefferson as

a scientist had been interested in finding out all he could about the nature and extent of the North American continent, and he had encouraged explorers interested in the Far West. After becoming President he renewed his efforts. In 1803, before Napoleon's offer to sell Louisiana, Jefferson planned an expedition that was to cross all the way to the Pacific Ocean and gather not only geographical facts but also information about the prospects for Indian trade. Congress having secretly provided the necessary funds, Jefferson named as leader of the expedition his private secretary and Virginia neighbor, the thirty-two-year-old Meriwether Lewis, who as a veteran of Indian wars was skilled in wilderness ways. Lewis chose as a colleague the twenty-eight-year-old William Clark, who, like George Rogers Clark, his older brother, and like Lewis himself, was an experienced frontiersman and Indian fighter.

Lewis and Clark, with a chosen company of four dozen hardy men, set up winter quarters in St. Louis at about the time the United States took formal possession of Louisiana. In the spring of 1804 they started up the Missouri River, and with the Shoshoni squaw Sacaja-

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#### The Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804-1806

*Patrick Gass, one of the men who accompanied Lewis and Clark, wrote A Journal of the Voyages and Travels of a Corps of Discovery (1811), which was the first account of the expedition to be published. This book was illustrated with crude drawings. The one here reproduced was captioned "Captain Lewis & Clark holding a Council with the Indians."*



wea as their guide, her papoose on her back, they eventually crossed the Rocky Mountains, descended the Snake and the Columbia rivers, and in the late autumn of 1805 encamped on the Pacific coast. In September 1806 they were back again in St. Louis, bringing with them carefully kept records of what they had observed along the way. No longer was the Far West a completely unknown country.

While Lewis and Clark were on their epic journey, Jefferson sent out other explorers to fill in the picture of the Louisiana Territory. The most important of these was Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike. In the fall of 1805, then only twenty-six, Pike led an expedition from St. Louis up the Mississippi River in search of its source, and though he did not find it, he learned a good deal about the upper Mississippi Valley. In the summer of 1806 Pike was sent out again, this time by Wilkinson instead of Jefferson, to proceed up the valley of the Arkansas. He discovered, but failed in his attempt to climb, the peak that now bears his name. Then he turned southward into Mexico and ran into a Spanish army; he was compelled to surrender his maps and papers and return to the United States. His account of his Western travels left the impression that the land between the Missouri and the Rockies was a desert that American farmers could never cultivate and that ought to be left forever to the nomadic Indian tribes.

### THE BURR CONSPIRACY

In the long run the Louisiana Purchase prepared the way for the growth of the United States as a great continental power. Immediately, however, the purchase provoked reactions that threatened or seemed to threaten the very existence of the Union. From both the Northeast and the Southwest there soon arose rumors of secession plots.

Most of the American people heartily approved the acquisition of the new territory, as they indicated by their presidential votes in 1804, but some of the New England Federalists raged against it. Their feelings are understandable enough. Both their party and their section stood to lose in importance with the growth of the West. From their point of view the existence of the Northwest Territory was bad enough, for they would soon be outnumbered in national politics with the creation of new

states, the first of which in that area was admitted to the Union as the state of Ohio in 1803. The addition of Louisiana Territory, with its potential for still more new states, only made the evil worse in the minds of New England Federalists. A group of the most extreme of these men, known as the Essex Junto, concluded that the only recourse for New England was to secede from the Union and form a separate "Northern Confederacy." They justified such action by means of state-rights arguments similar to those Jefferson had used only about five years earlier in opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts.

If a Northern Confederacy were to have any hope for lasting success as a separate nation, it would have to include New York as well as New England, or so the prospective seceders believed. But the prominent New York Federalist Alexander Hamilton had no sympathy with the secessionist scheme. He wrote: "Dismemberment of our empire will be a clear sacrifice of great positive advantages without any counterbalancing good, administering no relief to our real disease, which is *democracy*." He feared that disorders like those of the French Revolution were about to sweep over the United States. Then, he thought, the country would need a military dictator, a sort of American Napoleon, to bring order out of chaos, and he imagined that he himself would emerge as the man of the hour. He had no future so far as ordinary politics was concerned.

His New York Republican rival, Aaron Burr, was another politician without prospects, at least within the party of the vengeful Jefferson. When some of the Federalists approached Burr, he agreed to run with their support for governor in 1804. Rumor had it that he was implicated in the disunion plot and that, if elected, he would lead the state into secession along with New England, but the rumor lacked proof and the plot itself was fantastic, an impossible dream. Nevertheless, Hamilton accused Burr of plotting treason and cast slurs upon his personal character. Burr lost the election, then challenged Hamilton to a duel. Hamilton dared not refuse; if he did, he would sacrifice his reputation for honor and manliness, a reputation that would be indispensable to the career supposedly awaiting him as the savior of his country. And so the two men with their seconds met at Weehawken, New Jersey, across the Hudson River from New York City, on a July morn-

ing in 1804. Hamilton was mortally wounded; he died the next day.

Burr, indicted for murder in both New Jersey and New York, presided over the United States Senate the following winter and then, at the end of his term as Vice President, faced a political outlook more hopeless than ever. He was ambitious and resourceful, with almost magical powers of attracting people to him. What could he do? During the next year he busied himself with mysterious affairs in the Southwest. He talked and corresponded with prominent men of the region, especially with General James Wilkinson, now governor of Louisiana Territory. Burr was up to something, and Wilkinson was his partner in it, but no one except Burr and Wilkinson themselves knew just what it was, and Burr told different stories. Some people believed (and some historians still believe) that he intended to separate the Southwest from the Union and rule it as an empire of his own. His ultimate aim most probably was the conquest of Spanish territory beyond the boundaries of Louisiana rather than the division of the United States.

In the fall of 1806 the armed followers of Burr, with Blennerhassett's Island as their rendezvous, started by boat down the Ohio River, Burr himself joining them after they were well under way. Wilkinson, suddenly turning against Burr, sent a messenger to tell Jefferson that treason was afoot and that an attack upon New Orleans was expected. Jefferson then issued a proclamation calling for the arrest of Burr and his men as traitors. Eventually Burr was captured and brought to Richmond for trial.

Jefferson, not present in Richmond but managing the prosecution by remote control from Washington, was determined to convict his one-time running mate. The prosecution relied hopefully upon its star witness, General Wilkinson, though Wilkinson was a despicable character who accepted pay as a spy for the Spaniards and who demanded extra money from them on the grounds that, in heading off the Burr expedition, he had saved their territory from attack! But Chief Justice Marshall, presiding over the case on circuit duty, had political as well as judicial reasons for insisting that Burr be given a fair hearing.

At the trial (1807-1808) Marshall applied quite literally the clause of the Constitution that says no one shall be convicted of treason except upon the testimony of at least two witnesses to the same "overt act." He excluded all evidence not bearing directly upon such an act, and so the jury had little choice but to acquit Burr, since not even one witness had actually seen him waging war against the United States or giving aid and comfort to its enemies.

Though freed, Burr gained lasting notoriety as a traitor; after exiling himself abroad for a few years, he returned and lived long enough to hail the Texas revolution (1836) as the fruition of the same sort of movement that he had hoped to start. The trial had given the Chief Justice another chance to frustrate the President. It had set a precedent that made it almost impossible to convict anyone of treason against the United States. And the loyalty of the Southwestern frontiersmen had been proved beyond a doubt by their patriotic reaction to the cry of treason in their midst.

## Selected Readings

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# Free Seas and Fresh Lands





## Eight

The European war, renewed in 1803, was both a blessing and a curse for the United States. The continual conflict abroad enabled Americans to develop a profitable trade with the belligerents on both sides and at times to play them off against each other to the diplomatic advantage of this country—as in the cases of the Pinckney Treaty with Spain and the Louisiana treaty with France. Yet the war in Europe jeopardized the policy proclaimed by Washington and endorsed by Jefferson—the policy of neutrality and peace. Twice the United States got involved in the European struggle—the first time in opposition to France (1798) the second time in opposition to Great Britain (1812).

The War of 1812 was anomalous in many ways. Though avowedly waged for free seas and sailors' rights, it was opposed by the group most directly interested in seagoing commerce—the New England merchants—who sincerely referred to it as Mr. Madison's war, not the nation's. Peace overtures began before the fighting did, and the peace treaty was signed before the last and greatest of the battles had been fought. The treaty did not even mention the most important of the war aims—the conquest of Canada and the elimination of impressment. Indeed, the war was at best a draw, and the United States was lucky to avoid surrendering some of its own territory.

Yet the war had important consequences. It broke the Indian barriers that had stood in the way of the northwestward and southwestward expansion of settlement. It gave a boost to the spirit of nationalism, which discredited the antiwar party and helped to overcome the divisive forces of postwar sectionalism. Perhaps most important of all, it stimulated the growth of manufactures, thus accelerating the progress of the nation toward industrial greatness.

The year the war ended, 1815, marks a turning point in the relations of the United States with the rest of the

### **The Burning of Washington**

*After the British had invaded Washington, in August 1814, Admiral Sir George Cockburn gave orders to burn the government buildings but to spare private property. His superior, Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, afterward wrote him "I am sorry you left a house standing in Washington—depend upon it, it is mistaken mercy." This picture is from a contemporary British woodcut. (Library of Congress)*

world. Previously, this country had become involved again and again in the brouls of Europe, and much of the time the requirements of diplomacy had dictated domestic

policies. Afterward, for almost a century, domestic politics held a clear priority over foreign affairs as the country entered upon a period of comparative "isolation."

## **Causes of Conflict**

The causes of the War of 1812 were debated by politicians at the time and have been disputed by historians ever since. One view emphasizes the question of frontier lands, and another the question of freedom of the seas. Actually, these matters were interrelated, and both must be taken into account.

### **NEUTRAL RIGHTS**

In the early 1800s the warring nations of Europe found it impossible to take care of their own shipping needs. The merchant ships of France and Spain seldom ventured far upon the ocean, dominated as it was by the sea power of Great Britain, and the merchant marine of Britain herself was too busy in the waters of Europe and Asia to devote much attention to those of America. To some degree or other, all the belligerents had to depend upon the neutrals of the world for cargoes essential to effective war-making, and in the size and activity of its merchant marine the United States was the most important of the neutrals. American ship-owners prospered as, year after year, they engrossed a larger and larger proportion of the carrying trade between Europe and the West Indies. Farmers shared in the prosperity, for exports from the United States to the West Indies and Europe also increased prodigiously.

In the Battle of Trafalgar (1805) a British fleet practically destroyed what was left of the French navy. Thereafter the supremacy of Great Britain upon the seas was unchallenged, while Napoleon proceeded to extend his domination over the continent of Europe. Powerless to invade the British Isles, Napoleon devised a scheme, known as the Continental System, which he hoped would bring the enemy to

terms. The British, he reasoned, were a nation of shopkeepers who depended for their existence upon buying and selling in the rest of the world, especially in Europe. If he could close the continent to their trade, he thought, they ultimately would have to give in. So, in a series of decrees beginning with those of Berlin (1806) and Milan (1807), he proclaimed that British ships and neutral ships touching at British ports were not to land their cargoes at any European port controlled by France or her allies.

The British government replied to Napoleon's decrees with a succession of orders-in-council. These announced an unusual kind of blockade of the European coast. The blockade was intended not to keep goods out of Napoleon's Europe but only to see that the goods were carried either in British vessels or in neutral vessels stopping at a British port and paying for a special license. Thus, while frustrating the Continental System, Britain would compel the neutrals to contribute toward financing her war effort, and she would limit the growth of her maritime rivals, above all the United States.

Caught between Napoleon's decrees and Britain's orders, American vessels sailing directly for Europe took the chance of capture by the British, and those going by way of a British port ran the risk of seizure by the French. Both of the warring powers disregarded American rights and sensibilities, yet to most Americans the British seemed like the worse offender of the two. Possessing effective sea power, they pounced upon Yankee merchantmen all over the wide ocean; the French could do so only in European ports. True, Napoleon's officials sometimes imprisoned and brutally mistreated the crews of confiscated ships, but the British



navy far more often infringed upon personal liberty and national sovereignty, stopping American ships on the high seas and taking sailors off the decks as victims of impressment.

## IMPRESSMENT

The British navy—with its floggings, its low pay, and its dirty and dangerous conditions on shipboard—was a “floating hell” to its sailors. They had to be impressed (forced) into the service and at every good opportunity they deserted, many of them joining the merchant marine of the United States and even its navy. To check this loss of vital manpower, the British claimed the right to stop and search American merchantmen, though not naval vessels, and reimpress deserters. They did not claim the right to take native-born Americans, but they did seize naturalized Americans born on British soil, for according to the laws of England a true-born subject could never give up his allegiance to the King: once an Englishman, always an Englishman. In actual practice the British often impressed native as well as naturalized Americans, and thousands upon thousands of sailors claiming the protection of the Stars and Stripes were thus kidnapped. To these hapless men, impressment was little better than slavery. To their shipowning employers it was at least a serious nuisance. And to millions of proud and patriotic Americans, even those living far from the ocean, it was an intolerable affront to the national honor.

In the summer of 1807, in the *Chesapeake-Leopard* incident, the British went to more outrageous extremes than ever. The *Chesapeake* was a public and not a private vessel, a frigate of the United States navy and not an ordinary merchantman. Sailing from Norfolk, with several alleged deserters from the British navy among the crew, the *Chesapeake* was hailed by His Majesty's Ship *Leopard*, which had been lying in wait off Cape Henry, at the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. Commodore James Barron refused to allow the *Chesapeake* to be searched, and so the *Leopard* opened fire and compelled him, unprepared for action as he was, to strike his colors. A boarding party from the *Leopard* dragged four men off the American frigate.

This was an attack upon the United States! When news of the outrage got around the country, most of the people cried for a war of revenge. Not since the days of Lexington and Concord had Americans been so strongly aroused; never again were they to be so solidly united in opposition to Great Britain. Even the “most temperate people and those most attached to England,” the British minister reported home, “say that they are bound as a people and that they must assert their honor on the first attack upon it.” If Congress had been in session, or if President Jefferson had called a special session, as he was urged to do, the country might have stampeded into war. But, as the French minister in Washington informed Talleyrand, “the President does not want war,” and “Mr. Madison dreads it now still more.”

Instead of assembling Congress and demanding a war declaration, Jefferson made a determined effort to maintain the national honor with peace. First, he issued an order expelling all British warships from American waters, so as to lessen the likelihood of future incidents. Then he sent instructions to his minister in England, James Monroe, to get satisfaction from the British government and to insist again upon the complete renunciation of impressment. On the whole the British government was conciliatory enough. It disavowed the action of Admiral Berkeley, the officer primarily responsible for the *Chesapeake-Leopard* affair, recalled him, and offered to indemnify the wounded and the families of the killed and to return the captured sailors (only three were left; one had been hanged). But the British cabinet refused to concede anything to Jefferson's main point; instead, the cabinet issued a proclamation reasserting the right of search to recover deserting seamen.

Thus the impressment issue stood between the British and American governments and prevented a compromise that might have led away from war. Though by 1812 the British had made a money settlement, the *Chesapeake* outrage meanwhile remained an open sore in Anglo-American relations. This incident, together with the impressment issue involved in it, was probably the most important single cause of the War of 1812, even though its final effect was delayed for five years.

United States

of America.

No. 3170

I **William B. Lee**, Collector for the District of Salem and Essex, do hereby certify, that **John Hallis** is an American Seaman, aged **thirteen** years or thereabouts, of the height of **five feet seven inches**, and of a **Dark** complexion. Was born in **Salem** in the State of **Massachusetts**.

has this day followed to sea proof, on the tender directed in the Act entitled, "An Act for the Relief and Protection of American Seamen," and I do hereby certify, that the said **John Hallis** is a Citizen of the United States of America.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and Seal of Office, at **Salem**, in the County of **Essex**, in the State of **Massachusetts**, this **1st** day of **January**, 1861.

**William B. Lee** Collector

#### Seaman's Protection Paper

To protect American sailors from British impressment, Congress authorized the issuance of certificates of American citizenship, which came to be known as "protection" papers. These papers were not always respected by British naval officers. To them a certificate of naturalization was meaningless, for the British government claimed the allegiance of all British subjects for life. A certificate of American birth was not dependable, for it could be obtained by fraud. Some Americans made a business of selling forged documents. One woman, it is said, had an oversized cradle built, for British deserters to climb into, so that she could honestly swear that she had known them from the cradle. (Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.)

**"PEACEABLE COERCION"**

Even at the height of the excitement over the *Chesapeake*, Jefferson made no preparations for a possible war. He and Madison believed that, if worse came to worst, the United States could bring Great Britain to terms, and France as well, through the use of economic pressure instead of military or naval force. Dependent as both nations were upon the Yankee carrying trade, they presumably would mend their ways if they were completely deprived of it.

Hence, when Congress met for its regular session, Jefferson hastily drafted an embargo bill, Madison revised it, and both the House and the Senate promptly enacted it into law. The embargo prohibited American ships from leaving this country for any port in the world if it had specified only British and French ports it could have been evaded by means of false clearance papers. Congress also passed a force act to make the embargo effective.

Though the law was nevertheless evaded in various ways, it was effective enough to be felt in France, much more in Great Britain, and still more in the United States itself. Throughout the United States—except in the frontier areas of Vermont and New York, which soon

doubled their overland exports to Canada—the embargo brought on a serious depression. The planters of the South and the farmers of the West, though deprived of foreign markets for their crops, were willing to suffer in comparative silence, devoted Jeffersonian Republicans that most of them were. But the Federalist merchants and shipowners of the Northeast, still harder hit by the depression, made no secret of their rabid discontent.

Though the Northeastern merchants disliked impressment, the orders-in-council, and Napoleon's decrees, they hated Jefferson's embargo much more. Previously, in spite of risks, they had kept up their business with excellent and even fabulous returns, now they lost money every day their ships idled at the wharves. Again, as at the time of the Louisiana Purchase, they concluded that Jefferson had violated the Constitution (as indeed he had—if judged by the principles he had advocated before becoming President).

In the midst of the embargo-induced depression came the election of 1808. The Federalists, with C. C. Pinckney again their candidate, made the most of the embargo's unpopularity and won a far larger proportion of the popular and electoral votes than in 1804, yet

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**Commercial  
Warfare  
[1806–1810]**

**Napoleon's Berlin Decree, 1806** No vessel coming from or touching at a British port shall be received at any European port of France or her allies.

**British Orders-in-Council, 1807** All vessel trading to or from enemy ports shall be subject to capture unless they first put in at a British port, pay a fee, and obtain a certificate.

**Napoleon's Milan Decree, 1807** Any vessel submitting to search by an English ship or paying any fee to the English government shall be considered as an English vessel and shall be liable to seizure.

**The U.S. Embargo Act, 1807** No ship shall clear from the United States for any foreign port. No ship shall depart even for another American port without first giving bond of twice the value of ship and cargo that the goods will be reloaded within the United States.

**The U.S. Non-Intercourse Law, 1809** All shipping and trade between the United States and British or French controlled ports (but not the rest of the world) are prohibited. If either Great Britain or France "shall cease to violate the neutral commerce of the United States" trade and shipping will be resumed with the nation so doing.

**Macon's Bill No. 2, 1810** Intercourse with France and Great Britain is renewed, but if either nation ceases its violations of American rights, and the other refuses to do so, the provisions of the Non-Intercourse Law will be reimposed against the nation thus refusing.

Madison was safely elected as Jefferson's successor. The Federalists also gained a number of seats in the House and the Senate, though the Republicans continued to hold a majority in both houses. To Jefferson and Madison the returns indicated plainly enough that the embargo was a growing liability in politics. A few days before going out of office, Jefferson approved a bill terminating his and Madison's first experiment with what he called "peaceable coercion." But Jefferson's succession by Madison meant no basic change in policy, and other experiments with measures short of war were soon to be tried.

By the time he entered upon his presidential duties, James Madison already had a career behind him that would assure him immortality in history books. He was not only experienced in affairs of government; he was also a more profound and original thinker than he was credited with being by his contemporaries and by later generations who have assumed that he was merely Jefferson's echo. Unfortunately for his reputation, he was not an impressive figure of a man, but was small and wizened, with a scholarly frown. Nor was he equipped with the personal charm or politician's skill needed for strong presidential leadership. What he lacked in personality, his wife more than supplied. Dolley Madison, North Carolina born, was as gay and gracious a First Lady as ever adorned the White House.

Just before Madison's inauguration, Congress passed a modified embargo bill known as the Nonintercourse Act. The Nonintercourse Act was soon replaced by another expedient commonly called Macon's Bill No. 2 (1810). This freed commercial relations with the whole world, including Great Britain and France, but authorized the President to prohibit intercourse with either belligerent if it should continue its violations after the other had stopped. The freeing of American trade was more to the advantage of the British than the French, since it fitted in with the efforts of the former to pierce and weaken the Continental System. Napoleon had every incentive to induce the United States to reimpose the embargo against his enemy. He succeeded in doing so by means of a trick, the Cadore letter, which pretended to revoke the Berlin and Milan decrees as far as they interfered with American commerce. Madison accepted the Cadore letter as evi-

dence of Napoleon's change of policy, even though the French continued to confiscate American ships. He announced that early in 1811, an embargo against Great Britain alone would automatically go into effect, in accordance with Macon's Bill, unless Britain meanwhile rescinded her orders-in-council.

In time the new embargo, though less well enforced than the earlier, all-inclusive one had been, hurt the economy of England enough to cause influential Englishmen to petition their government for repeal of the orders-in-council. Eventually the orders were repealed—too late to prevent war, even if they had been the only grievance giving rise to the martial spirit in the United States. But there were other grievances, namely, impressment and a border conflict between the British Empire and the expanding American frontier.

## RED MEN AND REDCOATS

Ever since the days of the Revolution the Indians generally had looked to their old "white father," the King of England, for protection against the relentlessly advancing Americans. And the British in Canada had relied upon Indian friendship to keep up their fur trade, even within the territory of the United States, and to maintain potentially useful allies. At one time, in 1794, this country nearly went to war with Great Britain because of her Indian policy, but Anthony Wayne's victory over the tribes at Fallen Timbers and the conclusion of Jay's Treaty dispelled the war danger and brought on a period of comparative peace. Then, in 1807, the border quiet was disturbed by an event occurring far away—the British assault upon the *Chesapeake*. The ensuing war crisis had repercussions that, as will be seen, terribly aggravated the frontier conflict between tribesmen and settlers. Much of this conflict of red men and white was personified in the two opposing leaders, Tecumseh and William Henry Harrison.

The Virginia-born Harrison, already a veteran Indian fighter at twenty-six, went to Washington as the congressional delegate from the Northwest Territory in 1799. He was largely responsible for the passage of the Harrison Land Law (1800), which enabled settlers to acquire farms from the public domain on much

easier terms than before. Land in the Northwest Territory soon was selling fast. The growth of population led to a division of the area into the state of Ohio and the territories of Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois. By 1812 Ohio contained 250,000 people and was beginning to look like an Eastern state, as paths widened into roads, villages sprang up and in some cases grew into cities, and the forests receded before the spreading cornfields. By 1812 Michigan had few settlers, but Illinois contained a scattered population of about 13,000, and Indiana 25,000.

Receiving from Jefferson an appointment as governor of Indiana Territory, Harrison devoted himself to carrying out Jefferson's policy of Indian removal. According to the Jeffersonian program, the Indians must give up their claims to tribal lands and either convert themselves into settled farmers or migrate to the west of the Mississippi. Playing off one tribe against another, and using whatever tactics suited the occasion—threats, bribes, trickery—Harrison made treaty after treaty with the separate tribes of the Northwest. By 1807 the United States claimed treaty rights to eastern Michigan, southern Indiana, and most of Illinois. Meanwhile, in the Southwest, millions of acres were taken from other tribes in the states of Georgia and Tennessee and in Mississippi Territory. Having been forced off their traditional hunting grounds, the Indians throughout the Mississippi Valley seethed with discontent. But the separate tribes, helpless by themselves against the power of the United States, probably would have quieted down and accepted their fate if two complicating factors had not arisen.

One complication was the policy of the British authorities in Canada. For years they had neglected their Indian friends across the border to the south. Then came the *Chesapeake* incident and the surge of anti-British feeling throughout the United States. Now the Canadian authorities, expecting war and an attempted invasion of Canada, began to take desperate measures for their own defense. "Are the Indians to be employed in case of a rupture with the United States?" asked the lieutenant governor of Upper Canada (December 1, 1807). And Sir James Craig, the governor general of the entire province, replied: "If we do not employ them, there cannot exist a moment's

doubt that they will be employed against us." Craig at once took steps to renew friendship with the Indians and provide them with increased supplies. Thus the trouble on the sea over the question of impressment intensified the border conflict hundreds of miles inland.

The second factor intensifying this conflict was the rise of a remarkable native leader, one of the most admirable and heroic in Indian history. Tecumseh, "The Shooting Star," chief of the Shawnees, aimed to unite all the tribes of the Mississippi Valley, resist the advance of white settlement, and recover the whole Northwest, making the Ohio River the boundary between the United States and the Indian country. He maintained that Harrison and others, by negotiating with individual tribes, had obtained no real title to land in the various treaties, since the land belonged to all the tribes and none of them could rightfully cede any of it without the consent of the rest. "The Great Spirit gave this great island to his red children. He placed the whites on the other side of the big water." So Tecumseh eloquently told Harrison. "They were not contented with their own, but came to take ours from us. They have driven us from the sea to the lakes—we can go no farther."

In his plans for a united front, Tecumseh was aided by his brother, a one-eyed, epileptic medicine man known as the Prophet. The Prophet, visiting the Great Spirit from time to time in trances, inspired a religious revival that spread through numerous tribes and helped bring them together. Few Indians doubted his supernatural powers after, having secretly learned from Canadian traders of a forthcoming eclipse, he commanded the sun to be dark on the appointed day. The Prophet's town, at the confluence of Tippecanoe Creek and the Wabash River, became the sacred place of the new religion as well as the headquarters of Tecumseh's confederacy. Leaving his brother there after instructing him to avoid war for the time being, Tecumseh journeyed down the Mississippi in 1811 to bring the Indians of the South into his alliance. At that time a great earthquake occurred centering at New Madrid, Missouri, and rumbling up and down the Mississippi Valley, causing much of the river to change its course. To many of the Indians, this seemed another awesome sign that a new era was at hand for them.

During Tecumseh's absence, Governor Harrison saw a chance to destroy the growing influence of the two Indian leaders. With 1,000 soldiers he camped near the Prophet's town, provoked an attack (November 7, 1811), and though suffering losses as heavy as those of the enemy, succeeded in driving off the Indians and burning the town. This, the Battle of Tippecanoe, disillusioned many of the Prophet's followers, for they had been led to believe that his magic would protect them from the white man's bullets. Tecumseh returned to find his confederacy shattered, yet there were still plenty of warriors eager for the warpath, and by the spring of 1812 they were busy with hatchet and scalping knife all along the frontier, from Michigan to Mississippi.

Westerners blamed Great Britain for the bloodshed along the border. Her agents in Canada encouraged Tecumseh, used the Prophet as a "vile instrument," as Harrison put it, and provided the guns and supplies that enabled the Indians to attack. To Harrison and to most of the frontiersmen, there seemed only one way to make the West safe for Americans. That was to drive the British out of Canada and annex that province to the United States.

While frontiersmen in the North demanded the conquest of Canada, those in the South looked to the acquisition of Florida. In Spanish hands, that territory was a perpetual nuisance, with slaves escaping across the line in one direction and Indians raiding across it in the other. Through Florida ran rivers like the Alabama, the Apalachicola, and others which in American possession would give access to the Gulf of Mexico and the markets of the world. In 1810 American settlers in West Florida took matters into their own hands, fell upon the Spanish fort at Baton Rouge, and requested that the territory be annexed to the United States. President Madison unhesitatingly proclaimed its annexation, then schemed to get the rest of Florida too. With Madison's connivance, the former Georgia governor George Mathews attempted to foment a revolt in East Florida (1811). Spain protested, and Madison backed down, but the desire of Southern frontiersmen for all of Florida did not abate. Spain was Britain's ally, and a war with Britain would give these frontiersmen an excuse for taking Spanish as well as British territory.

Thus the war fever was raging on both the

Northern and the Southern frontiers by 1812. The denizens of these outlying regions were not numerous as compared with the population of the country as a whole, and for the most part they were not directly represented in Congress, except by a few territorial delegates. Nevertheless, they were ably represented at the national capital by a group of determined young congressmen who, with good reason, soon gained the name of "war hawks."

### **THE WAR HAWKS**

Three days before the Battle of Tippecanoe a new Congress met in Washington for the session of 1811-1812. In the congressional elections of 1810, most of the voters had indicated their disgust with such expedients as Macon's Bill No. 2 by defeating large numbers of Republican advocates of measures short of war, as well as Federalist advocates of continued peace. Of the newly elected congressmen and senators, the great majority were warlike Republicans, and after the news of Tippecanoe they became more eager than ever for a showdown with the power that seemed to threaten both the security of the frontier and the freedom of the seas.

A new generation had arrived upon the political scene, a group of daring young men of whom the most influential came from the new states in the West or from the back country of the old states in the South. Two of the natural leaders were Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, whose careers were to provide much of the drama of American politics for the next four decades. The tall, magnetic Clay, barely thirty-four, was a Virginian by birth but had made Kentucky his home. Already, while still under the legal age for a senator, he had appeared briefly in the United States Senate. As handsome as Clay though less appealing, the twenty-nine-year-old Calhoun was the son of Scotch-Irish pioneers in the South Carolina hills.

When Congress organized in 1811, the war faction of young Republicans got control of both the House and the Senate. As Speaker of the House, Clay held a position of influence then second only to that of the President himself. Clay filled the committees with the friends of force, appointing Calhoun to the crucial Committee on Foreign Affairs, and launched a

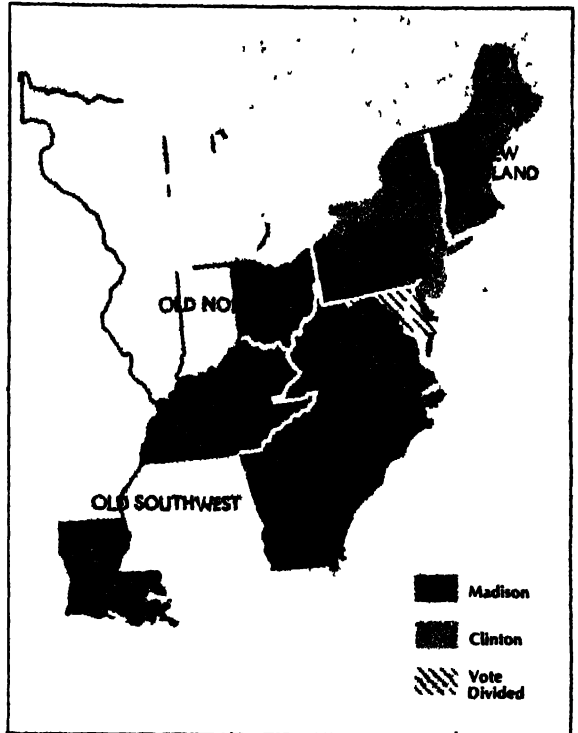
drive toward war for the conquest of Canada. This would bring Great Britain to terms and avenge the wrongs that Clay recited eloquently and at length. Or at least he supposed it would, and he further imagined that the conquest would be quick and easy.

The Federalists in Congress, representing the commercial interests of the Northeast, deprecated the clamor for Canada and war. But they were powerless to stem the drive toward hostilities, even with the aid of dissident Republicans like the eccentric "Quid," John Randolph of Roanoke. Dubbing the Clay men "war hawks," Randolph ridiculed their cry as being like that of the whippoorwill, "one eternal monotonous tone—Canada! Canada! Canada!"

While Congress debated, President Madison moved reluctantly toward the conclusion that war was necessary. In May the war faction took the lead in the caucus of Republican congressmen who renominated him for the presidency, and on June 1 he sent his war message to Congress.

In his message the President maintained that Great Britain—by impressing American citizens, interfering with American trade, and inciting the Indians along the frontier—was already waging war against the United States. He recommended that Congress declare war in return. Congress responded with a declaration of hostilities on June 18, two days after a new ministry had announced in Parliament that the orders-in-council were to be suspended, but before the news could reach Washington. The close vote on the declaration, 19 to 13 in the Senate and 79 to 49 in the House, showed how badly the American people were divided.

The division of public opinion was again revealed in the election of 1812. Opposing Madison and the war, a peace faction of the Republicans nominated a rival candidate, De Witt Clinton of New York, and the Federalists gave their support to him. Most of the electors in the



**Election of 1812**

Northeast voted for Clinton and peace, but all of those in the South and the West sustained Madison and war, the President being reelected, 128 to 89.

With the people thus divided, the country as a whole was not psychologically prepared for war, nor was it financially or militarily prepared. Congress had adjourned without increasing the army and navy, voting war taxes, or renewing the charter of the government's indispensable financial agency, the Bank of the United States, which expired in 1811. The war hawks, however, were not worried. On to Canada!

## The War of 1812

At first Great Britain, preoccupied with her mighty struggle against Napoleon, paid little attention to the American war, a mere annoyance to her. Then, in the fall of 1812, Napoleon launched the Russian campaign that, before the

winter was over, was to bring him disaster and prepare the way for his ultimate defeat. As the months passed, Great Britain was able to divert more and more of her military and naval power to America. Only for about a year did the

United States undertake the offensive; there-after this country was forced to fight a defensive war, a war to protect its own territory

### THE COURSE OF BATTLE

The conquest of Canada, supposedly a "mere matter of marching," as Jefferson himself put it, soon proved to be an exercise in frustration. A three-pronged invasion was planned to strike into Canada by way of Detroit, the Niagara River, and Lake Champlain, with the greatest concentration of force at Detroit. At Detroit, however, after marching into Canada, the elderly General William Hull, Governor of Michigan Territory, retreated and surrendered the fort (August 1812). The other invasion efforts also failed, and Fort Dearborn (Chicago) fell before an Indian attack.

During the year of disaster and defeat on land, the Madison administration and its supporters took what consolation they could in the news of successes on the sea. American frigates engaged British warships in a series of duels and won some spectacular victories, one of the most renowned being the victory of the *Constitution* over the *Guerrière*. American privateers destroyed or captured one British merchant ship after another, occasionally braving the coastal waters of the British Isles and burning vessels within sight of the shore. After that first year, however, the score was evened by the British navy, which not only drove the American frigates to cover but also instituted a close blockade of the United States and harried the coastal settlements from Virginia to Maine.

While British sea power dominated the ocean, American fleets arose to control the Great Lakes. First, the Americans took command of Lake Ontario, enabling troops to cross over to York (Toronto), the capital of Canada. At York (April 27, 1813) the invaders ran upon a cunningly contrived land mine, the explosion of which killed more than fifty, including General Zebulon M. Pike. Some of the enraged survivors, without authorization, set fire to the capital's public buildings, which burned to the ground. After also destroying some ships and military stores, the Americans returned across the lake.

Next, Lake Erie was redeemed for American use, mainly, through the work of the youth-

ful Oliver Hazard Perry. Having constructed a fleet at Presqu' Isle (Erie, Pennsylvania), Perry took up a position at Put-in-Bay, near a group of islands off the mouth of the Maumee River. With the banner "Don't Give up the Ship" flying on his flagship, he awaited the British fleet, whose intentions he had learned from a spy. He smashed the fleet upon its arrival (September 10, 1813) and established American control of the lake.

This made possible, at last, an invasion of Canada by way of Detroit. The post had been hard to reach overland, for supply wagons either had to struggle through the almost impassable Black Swamp of the Maumee Valley or had to make a long detour around it. After Perry's victory at Put-in-Bay, supplies as well as men could be quickly and easily transported by water. William Henry Harrison, who had replaced Hull in the Western command, now pushed up the River Thames into Upper Canada and won a victory (October 5, 1813), notable for the death of Tecumseh, who had been commissioned a brigadier general in the British army. The Battle of the Thames resulted in no lasting occupation of Canadian soil, but it disheartened the Indians of the Northwest and eliminated the worst of the danger they had offered to the frontier.

While Harrison was harrying the tribes of the Northwest, another Indian fighter was striking an even harder blow at the Creeks in the Southwest. The Creeks, aroused by Tecumseh on his Southern visit, were supplied by the Spaniards in Florida. These Indians had fallen upon Fort Mims, on the Alabama River just north of the Florida border, and had massacred the frontier families taking shelter within its stockade. Andrew Jackson, Tennessee planter and militia general, turning from his plans for invading Florida, tracked down the Creeks. In the Battle of Horseshoe Bend (March 27, 1814) Jackson's men took frightful vengeance, slaughtering squaws and children along with warriors. Then Jackson went into Florida and seized the Spanish fort at Pensacola.

After the Battles of the Thames and Horseshoe Bend, the Indians were of little use to the British. But, with the surrender of Napoleon in Europe, the British could send their veterans of the European war to dispose of the "dirty shirts," the unkempt Americans. In 1814 the





#### Victory at Sea

*As of 1812, the British in the course of the Napoleonic Wars had fought 200 naval battles and won 200 victories, in engagements between individual ships or whole fleets. Great Britain seemed invincible on the ocean. Then the United States frigate Constitution met and defeated three British vessels in a row. The third victim, off the coast of Brazil on December 19, 1812, was the Java, which was blown up after surrender and the removal of her crew, as shown in this sketch by an American naval lieutenant. (The Mariners Museum, Newport News, Va.)*

British prepared to invade the United States by three approaches—Chesapeake Bay, Lake Champlain (the historic route of Burgoyne), and the mouth of the Mississippi.

An armada under Admiral Sir George Cockburn, a hard-bitten old sea dog, sailed up the Patuxent River from Chesapeake Bay and landed an army that marched a short distance overland to Bladensburg, on the outskirts of the District of Columbia. Hastily drawn up to oppose this army was a much more numerous force of poorly trained militiamen. When the

firing started they gave more than they received, but they were unnerved by the repeated assaults of the well-disciplined redcoats and finally broke formation and ran. The British marched on into Washington (August 24, 1814), putting the government to flight. Then they deliberately burned the public buildings, including the White House, in retaliation for the earlier unauthorized incendiarism at York. The sack of Washington marked the low point of American fortunes in the war; better days were coming.

Leaving Washington in partial ruins, the invading army reembarked and proceeded up the bay, toward Baltimore. But Baltimore, guarded by Fort McHenry, was ready. To block the river approach, the garrison had stretched a chain across the Patapsco and had sunk several boats in the river. From a distance the British bombarded the fort (September 12, 1814) while through the night an American, Francis Scott Key, watched from one of the enemy ships where he had gone to secure the release of a prisoner. At the "dawn's early light," as Key wrote the next day, the flag on the fort was still flying "o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave." The British withdrew, and Key's words, set to the tune of an old drinking song, quickly became popular.

Meanwhile another invasion force was descending upon northern New York. On Lake Champlain the British mustered a fleet about the size of the American fleet drawn up to oppose it, and near by they had an army three times as large as the mixed force of regulars and militia facing it. Yet, in the Battle of Plattsburg (September 11, 1814), the defenders destroyed the invading fleet, and the invading army then retreated to Canada. The northern border was safe.

Far to the south the most serious threat of all soon materialized. In December 1814, a formidable array of battle-hardened veterans, fresh from the Duke of Wellington's peninsular campaign against the French in Spain, landed below New Orleans. On Christmas, Wellington's brother-in-law Sir Edward Pakenham arrived to take command. Neither he nor anyone else in America knew that a treaty of peace between the British and American governments had been signed in faraway Belgium the day before. Awaiting Pakenham's advance up the Mississippi was Andrew Jackson with a motley collection of Tennesseans, Kentuckians, Creoles, Negroes, and pirates drawn up behind breastworks. For all their drill and bravery, the redcoats advancing through the open (January 8, 1815) were no match for Jackson's well-protected men. Making good use of artillery as well as rifles, the Americans held their fire as each wave of attackers approached, then sent out deadly volleys at close range. Finally the British retreated while an American band struck up "Hail Columbia!" Left behind were 700 dead, including Paken-

ham himself, 1,400 wounded, and 500 other prisoners. Jackson's losses: 8 killed, 13 wounded.

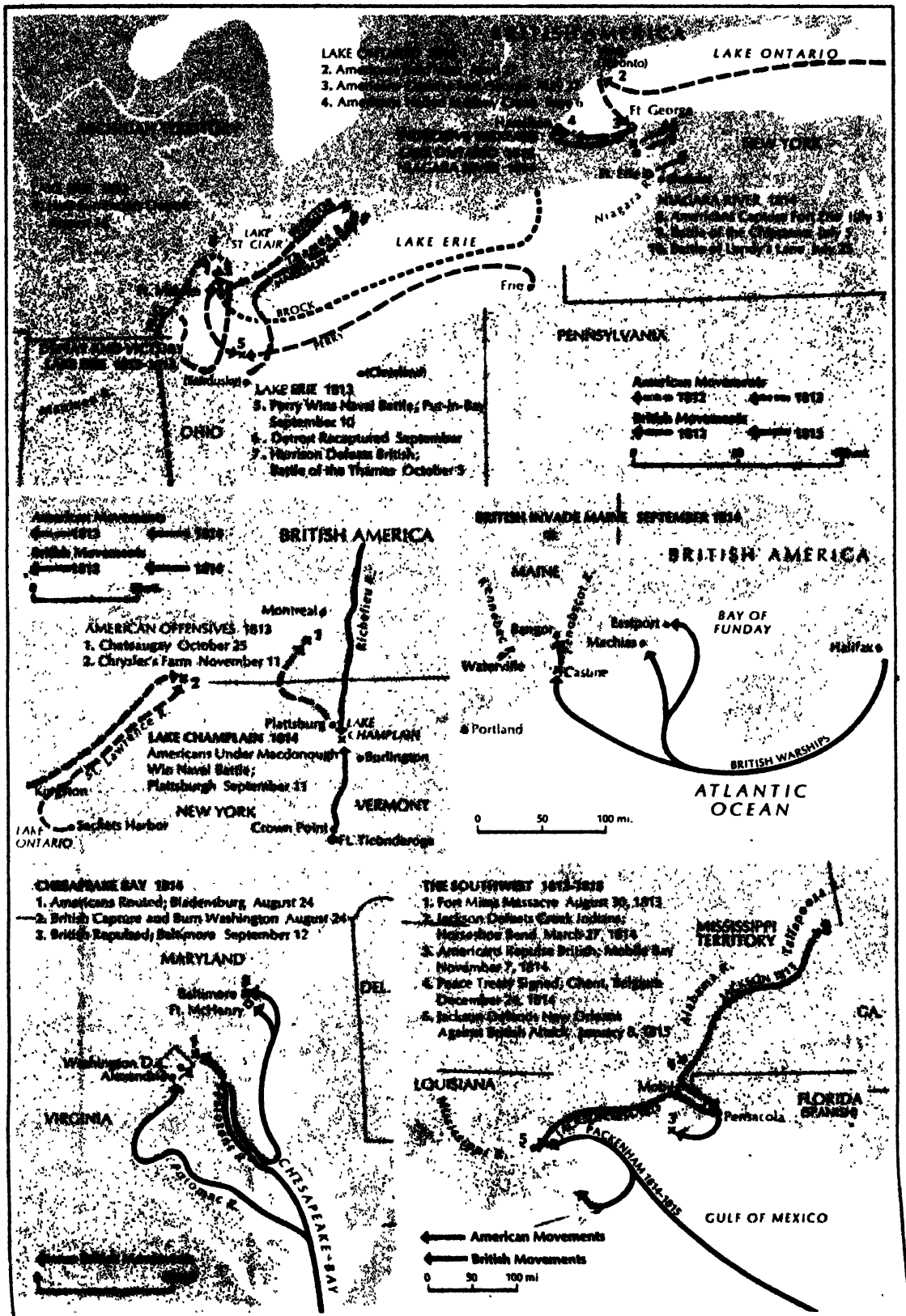
## NEW ENGLAND OBJECTIONS

With notable exceptions, such as the Battle of New Orleans, the military operations of the United States, 1812-1815, were rather badly bungled. This should cause little surprise. What is surprising is the fact that American arms succeeded as well as they did. After all, the government was woefully unprepared for the war at the outset and faced increasing popular opposition as the contest dragged on. The opposition centered in New England, and it went to remarkable extremes. Some of the Federalists there celebrated British victories, sabotaged their own country's war effort, and even plotted disunion and a separate peace.

Until 1814 the blockade did not extend north of Newport, Rhode Island, the British government deliberately cultivating the New England trade. Goods carried in Yankee ships helped to feed British troops in Canada as well as Spain, and for a time many a shipowner grew rich by trading with the enemy while denouncing Madison and the war, though eventually the business of the shipowners as a whole fell far below the level of the prosperous prewar years.

Though most of the money in the nation was concentrated in New England, only a small part of the government's war bonds could be sold there. One of the Treasury loans, desperately needed to keep soldiers in the field, almost fell through because of the refusal of the New England banks to lend. Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin had to turn to his friend John Jacob Astor of New York and two foreign-born bankers of Philadelphia for the necessary funds. On several occasions the governors of New England states refused to allow the state militia to take orders from the President or to fight outside the country.

In Congress the Republicans had continual trouble with the Federalist opposition. The leadership of the administration party fell to Calhoun, who devoted himself to justifying the war and raising men and money with which to fight it. At every step he ran against the obstructionists, foremost among them the young congressman from New Hampshire, Daniel



War of 1812

Webster. Introducing resolution after resolution to embarrass the administration, Webster demanded reasons for the war and intimated that Napoleon had tricked the President into antagonizing England, as in fact Napoleon had. Every measure to finance the fighting—by loans, taxes, tariffs, or a national bank—Webster and his Federalist allies vehemently denounced. At a time when volunteering lagged and the army was seriously undermanned, he opposed a bill to encourage enlistments. In its extremity the administration decided to draft men into the regular army from the state militia. Helping to defeat the conscription bill, Webster warned that no such law could be enforced in his part of the country.

As new states in the South and West, strongly Republican, were added to the Union, the Federalists had become more and more hopelessly a minority party in the country as a whole. But they were the majority in New England. If that section were to become a separate confederacy, they could control its destinies and escape the dictation of slaveholders and backwoodsmen. The talk of secession, heard before at the time of the Louisiana Purchase and again at the time of Jefferson's embargo, was revived during the war and reached a climax in the winter of 1814–1815, when the Republic appeared to be on the verge of ruin.

On December 15, 1814, while the British were beginning their invasion by way of New Orleans, delegates from the New England states met in Hartford, Connecticut, to consider the grievances of their section against the Madison administration. The would-be seceders were overruled by the comparatively moderate men who were in the overwhelming majority at the Hartford Convention. The convention's report reasserted the right of nullification but only hinted at secession, observing that "the severance of the Union by one or more States, against the will of the rest, and especially in time of war, can be justified only by absolute necessity." But the report proposed seven essential amendments by the Constitution, presumably as the condition of New England's remaining in the Union. These amendments were intended to protect New England from the growing influence of the South and the West.

The Federalists, apparently in a strong bargaining position, assumed that the Republi-

cans would have to give in to the Hartford Convention terms, since the government was in such dire extremity. Soon after the convention adjourned, however, the news of Jackson's smashing victory at New Orleans reached the cities of the Northeast. While most Americans rejoiced, the Federalists were plunged into gloom. A day or two later came tidings from abroad concerning the conclusion of a treaty of peace. Of course, the treaty had been signed before the Battle of New Orleans, but the people heard of the battle first. They got the impression that the United States had won the war. "Peace is signed in the arms of victory!" *Niles's Register* exclaimed. The Hartford Convention and the Federalist party were discredited as not only treasonable but also futile.

## THE PEACE SETTLEMENT

During the War of 1812 peace talks began before the battles did. President Madison, reluctant to ask for a declaration of war and "regretting the necessity which produced it," looked hopefully toward an early end to hostilities. Soon after the declaration the British government, wishing to liquidate a minor war and concentrate upon the major one, against Napoleon, sent an admiral to Washington with armistice proposals, but negotiations failed to develop because of Madison's continued insistence upon the renunciation of impressment. Britain's ally Russia, eager to get supplies from America as well as unhampered military aid from England, twice offered to mediate, the first time on the day before Napoleon's invading forces entered Moscow (September 13, 1812). The British politely declined both of the Czar's offers but finally agreed to meet the Americans in direct negotiations on neutral ground. After prolonged delays the peacemakers got together in Ghent, Belgium, on August 8, 1814.

The American peace delegation at Ghent happened to be composed of men of exceptional ability, men who were more than a match for their opposite numbers around the peace table. The delegation included men of both parties and all sections. At the head of it was John Quincy Adams, a former Federalist who had broken with his party to support Jefferson's

## The Hartford Convention [1815]

New England opponents of the war, meeting at Hartford, Connecticut, late in 1814, demanded the following amendments to the federal Constitution in their report, published early in the following year:

1. "Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers of free persons."
  2. "No new state shall be admitted into the Union by Congress . . . without the concurrence of two thirds of both houses."
  3. "Congress shall not have power to lay any embargo for more than sixty days."
  4. "Congress shall not have power, without the concurrence of two thirds of both houses, to interdict the commercial intercourse between the United States and any foreign nation."
  5. "Congress shall not make or declare war, or authorize acts of hostility against any foreign nation, without the concurrence of two thirds of both houses except such acts of hostility be in defence of the territories of the United States when actually invaded."
  6. "No person who shall hereafter be naturalized, shall be eligible as a member of the senate or house of representatives of the United States, nor capable of holding any civil office under the authority of the United States."
  7. "The same person shall not be elected president of the United States a second time, nor shall the president be elected from the same state two terms in succession."
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embargo, and a diplomat of varied experience who recently had been minister to Russia. One of his colleagues was Henry Clay, once a war hawk, now a peace dove. Another was the Secretary of the Treasury in both Jefferson's and Madison's administrations, Albert Gallatin. A natural diplomat, Gallatin held the delegation together by moderating the disputes of Adams and Clay.

At Ghent the two sets of peacemakers at first presented fantastically extreme demands, then gradually backed down and finally agreed to a compromise. The Americans, in accordance with their instructions, originally demanded the renunciation of impressment as a necessary condition to peace, and they also asked for all or part of Canada and for British aid in acquiring Florida from Spain. The Englishmen, contrary to their instructions, presented an ultimatum requiring the United States to cede territory in the Northwest for the formation of an Indian buffer state. Then, when their home government refused to sustain them in the ultimatum, they withdrew it and proposed that peace be made on the principle of *uti possidetis*. This meant that each of the belligerents

should keep the territory it actually held whenever the fighting stopped. Expecting large territorial gains from the invasion of America, the Englishmen at Ghent tried to delay negotiations so as to maximize the gains. But the government in London, becoming more and more alarmed by developments in Europe, decided to hasten the settlement with the United States and recommended peace on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum*, which meant a return to things as they had been before the war began. Already President Madison had advised his delegation that they need no longer make an issue of impressment. A treaty providing for the status quo, hastily drawn up, was signed on Christmas Eve 1814.

According to the Treaty of Ghent, the war was to end not immediately, but when the document had been ratified and proclaimed on both sides (hence it is not exactly true, as is sometimes said, that the battle of New Orleans was fought after the war was over). Each of the belligerents was to restore its wartime conquests to the other. Four commissions with both American and British members were to be appointed to agree upon disputed or unde-

terminated segments of the boundary between Canada and the United States.

The Treaty of Ghent was followed by other settlements that contributed to the improvement of Anglo-American relations. A separate commercial treaty (1815) gave Americans the right to trade freely with England and the British Empire except for the West Indies. A fisheries convention (1818) renewed the privileges of Americans to catch and dry fish at specified places along the shores of British North America. The Rush-Bagot agreement (1817) provided for mutual disarmament on the Great Lakes. Gradually disarmament was extended to the land, and eventually (though not till 1872) the Canadian-American boundary became the longest "unguarded frontier" in the world.

Though the British had not renounced impressment in principle, they ceased to apply it in practice after 1815. With the final end of the Napoleonic wars after the battle of Waterloo, the nations of Europe entered upon a century of comparative peace, broken only by wars of limited scale. So the British no longer had occasion to violate American sovereignty on the high seas, and the government and people of the United States could afford to devote their energies primarily to affairs at home.

## **FREE SEAS AGAIN**

No sooner had peace come in 1815 than Congress declared war again, this time against Algiers, which had taken advantage of the War of 1812 to loose its pirates once more against American shipping in the Mediterranean. Two American squadrons now proceeded to North African waters. One of the two, under the command of Stephen Decatur, a naval hero of the late war with England, captured a number of corsair ships, blockaded the coast of Algiers, and forced the Dey to accept a treaty that not only ended the payment of tribute by the United States but required the Dey to pay reparations to this country. Going on to Tunis and Tripoli, Decatur collected additional indemnities in both of those places. This naval action in the Mediterranean brought a more clear-cut victory for the freedom of the seas than had the War of 1812 itself. Of course, the victory was made possible by the growth in naval strength and national spirit which the war with England had occasioned. After 1816, when the Dey of Algiers began to make trouble again, only to have his entire fleet destroyed by combined British and Dutch forces, the United States had no further difficulties with the Barbary pirates.

## **Postwar Expansion**

Americans could now give their full attention to domestic problems as the country, during a postwar boom, expanded its economy, its territory, and its population. Suddenly the boom terminated in a bust.

### **BANKS, TARIFFS, ROADS**

The War of 1812 led to chaos in shipping and banking, as well as stimulating the growth of manufactures, and exposed dramatically the inadequacy of the existing transportation system. Hence arose the postwar issues of reestablishing the Bank of the United States, protecting the new industries, and providing a nationwide network of roads and waterways. On these issues the former war hawks Clay and Calhoun became the leading advocates of the

national as opposed to the local or sectional point of view. The party of Jefferson now sponsored measures of a kind once championed by the party of Hamilton. In regard to the Bank and the tariff the new nationalists were completely successful; in regard to internal improvements, only partly so.

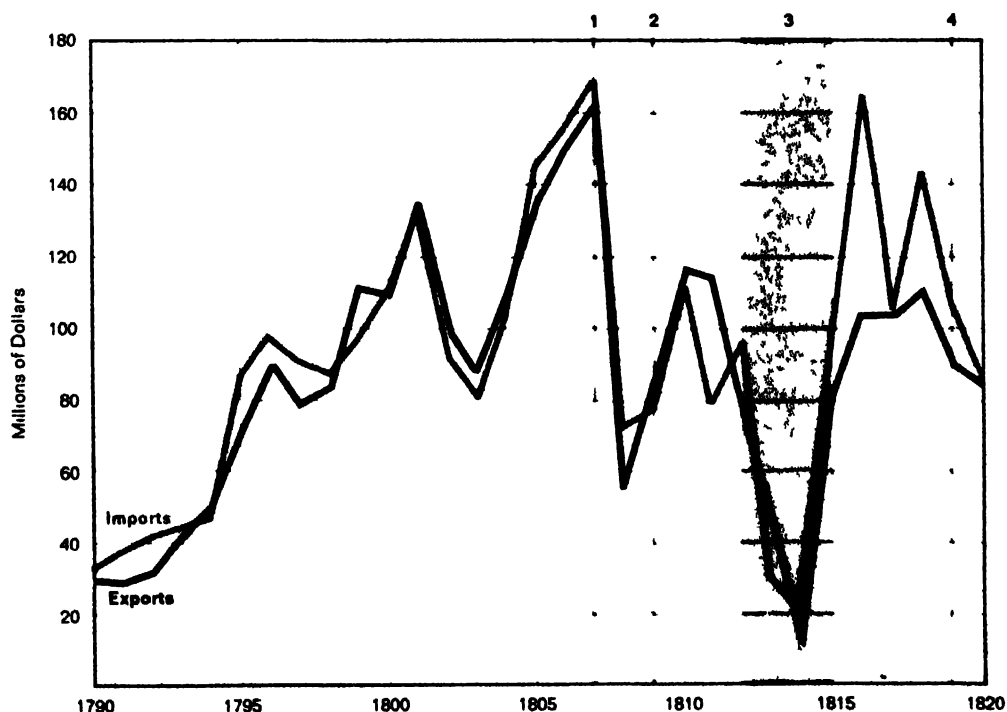
The wartime experience seemed to make necessary another national bank. After the first Bank's charter expired (1811), a large number of state banks sprang up. These issued vast quantities of banknotes (promises to pay, which then served much the same purpose as bank checks were later to do) and did not always bother to keep a large enough reserve of gold or silver to redeem the notes on demand. The notes passed from hand to hand more or less as money, but their actual value depended upon the reputation of the bank that issued

them, and the variety of issues was so confusing as to make honest business difficult and counterfeiting easy. Thus bank money was not legal tender, and it was not issued directly by the state governments, yet its issuance hardly conformed with the clause of the Constitution giving Congress the exclusive power to regulate the currency and forbidding the states to emit bills of credit.

Congress struck at the currency evil not by prohibiting state banknotes but by chartering a second Bank of the United States in 1816. Except that it was allowed a larger capital, this institution was essentially the same as the one founded under Hamilton's leadership in 1791. In return for the charter, the Bank had to pay a "bonus" of \$15 million to the government. Though its potentialities were not fully realized

*The Embargo Act (1807) reduced trade in 1808 and 1809 to about half of what it had been in the years immediately preceding, when it was stimulated by the war in Europe. The War of 1812 caused trade to shrink still further in 1813 and 1814. During the postwar recovery, imports considerably exceeded exports, creating an unfavorable balance of trade and provoking demands for increased tariff protection.*

**Balance of Trade Exports and Imports of Goods and Services  
To and From All Countries 1790-1820**



- 1 Embargo Act Passed (in effect 1808-1809)
- 2 Nonintercourse Law (in effect)
- 3 War of 1812
- 4 Panic of 1819 (followed by business depression)

during the first few years of its existence, this national bank possessed the power of controlling the state banks by presenting their notes from time to time and demanding payment either in cash or in its own notes, which were as good as gold. Once the Bank of the United States began to exercise its power, the state banks had to stay on a specie-paying basis or risk being forced out of business.

The war had a disastrous effect upon American shipping, especially after the British blockade was extended to include the New England coast. Between 1811 and 1814 exports dropped from \$61 million to \$7 million, and imports from \$53 million to \$13 million. The total tonnage of American vessels engaged in foreign trade declined from about 950,000 to less than 60,000 tons. Some ships managed to escape the blockade but others were caught and confiscated, altogether about 1,300 of them.

Farmers, unable to get their produce out to the markets of the world, suffered from the ruin of the carrying trade, but manufacturers prospered as foreign competition almost disappeared in consequence of the embargoes and the blockade. Much of the capital and labor formerly employed in commerce and ship-building was diverted to manufacturing. Goods were so scarce that, even with comparatively unskilled labor and poor management, new factories could be started with an assurance of quick profits.

The American textile industry had grown rather slowly until English imports were checked by Jefferson's Embargo of 1807 and then by the War of 1812. The first census of manufacturing, in 1810, counted 269 cotton and 24 woolen mills in the country. From 1807 to 1815 the total number of cotton spindles increased from 8,000 to 130,000. Most of the factories were located in New England. Until 1814 they produced only yarn and thread: the weaving of cloth was left to families operating hand looms at home. Then the Boston merchant Francis C. Lowell, after examining textile machinery in England, perfected a power loom that was an improvement on its English counterpart. Lowell organized the Boston Manufacturing Company and founded at Waltham, Massachusetts, the first mill in America to carry on the processes of spinning and weaving under a single roof.

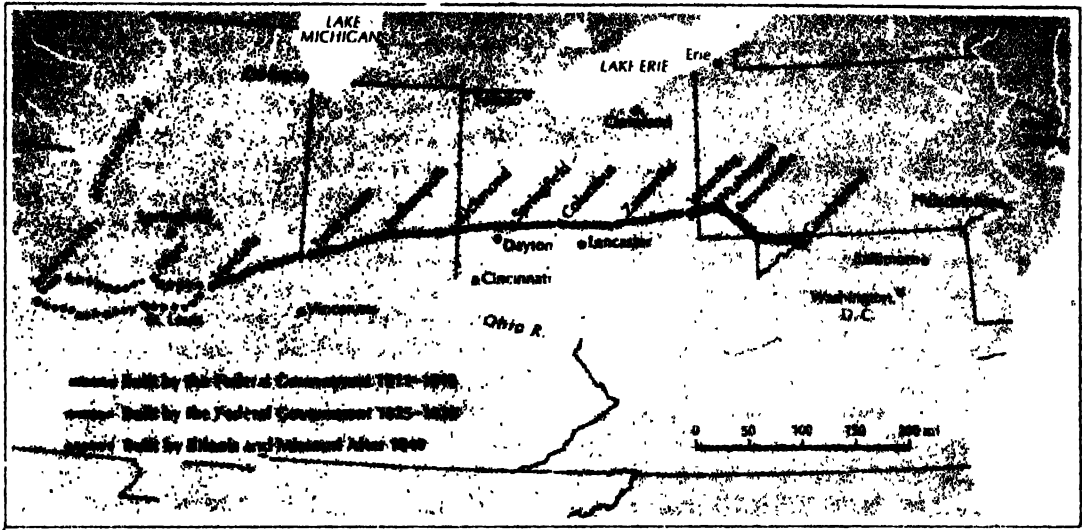
As the war came to an end, the manufacturing prospects of the United States were suddenly dimmed. British ships swarmed alongside American wharves and began to unload their cargoes of manufactured goods at cut prices, even selling below cost. As Lord Brougham explained to Parliament, it was "well worth while to incur a loss upon the first exportation, in order, by the glut, to stifle in the cradle those rising manufactures in the United States, which war had forced into existence, contrary to the natural course of things." Thus, though the war was over, Great Britain persisted in a kind of economic warfare against the United States.

The "infant industries" needed protection if they were to survive and grow strong enough to stand upon their own feet against foreign competition. So the friends of industry maintained, reviving the old arguments of Hamilton. In 1816 the protectionists brought about the passage of a tariff law with rates high enough to be definitely protective, especially on cotton cloth.

The war had delayed the extension of steamboat lines on both eastern and western waters. Not until 1816 did a river steamer, the *Washington*, make a successful voyage upstream as far as Louisville, at the falls of the Ohio. Within a few years steamboats were carrying far more cargo on the Mississippi than all the flatboats, barges, and other primitive crafts combined.

When Ohio was admitted as a state (1803) the federal government agreed that part of the proceeds from the sale of public lands there should be used for building roads. In 1807 Jefferson's Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, proposed that a national road, financed partly by Ohio land sales, be built from the Potomac to the Ohio, and both Congress and the President approved. The next year Gallatin presented a comprehensive plan of internal improvements, requiring an appropriation of \$20 million, but Jefferson doubted the constitutionality of such an expenditure, and the plan was shelved. Finally, in 1811, construction of the National Road began, at Cumberland, Maryland, on the Potomac. By 1818 this highway, with a crushed stone surface and massive stone bridges, was completed to Wheeling, Virginia, on the Ohio. Meanwhile the state of





**The National Road**

Pennsylvania contributed \$100,000 to a private company which extended the Lancaster pike westward to Pittsburgh.

Over both of these roads moved a heavy traffic of stagecoaches, Conestoga wagons, private carriages, and other vehicles, as well as droves of cattle. Despite the high tolls, freight rates across the mountains now were lower than ever before. They were not low enough to permit the long-distance hauling of bulky loads like wheat or flour. But commodities with a high value in proportion to their weight, especially manufactures, moved from the Atlantic seaboard to the Ohio Valley in unprecedented quantities.

Despite the progress being made with steamboats and turnpikes, there remained serious gaps in the transportation network of the country, as experience during the War of 1812 had shown. Once the coastwise shipping had been cut off by the British blockade, the coastal roads became choked by the unaccustomed volume of north-south traffic. At the river ferries, long lines of wagons waited for a chance to cross. Ox carts, pressed into emergency service, took six or seven weeks to go from Philadelphia to Charleston. In various localities there appeared serious shortages of goods normally carried by sea, and prices rose to new heights,

rice costing three times as much in New York as in Charleston, flour three times as much in Boston as in Richmond. On the northern and western frontiers the military campaigns of the United States were frustrated partly by the absence of good roads.

With this wartime experience in mind, President Madison in 1815 called the attention of Congress to the "great importance of establishing throughout our country the roads and canals which can be best executed under the national authority," and he suggested that a constitutional amendment would resolve any doubts about the authority of Congress to provide for the construction of canals and roads. Representative Calhoun promptly espoused a bill by which the moneys due the government from the Bank of the United States—both the "bonus" and the government's share of the annual profits—would be devoted to internal improvements. "Let us, then, bind the republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals," Calhoun urged. "Let us conquer space."

Congress passed the bonus bill, but President Madison, on his last day in office (March 3, 1817), returned it with his veto. While he approved its purpose, he still believed that a constitutional amendment was necessary. And so

with some exceptions, the tremendous task of internal improvements was left to the state governments and to private enterprise

### "ERA OF GOOD FEELINGS"

After 1800 the presidency seemed to have become the special possession of Virginians, who passed it from one to another in unvarying sequence. After two terms in office Jefferson named his Secretary of State, James Madison, to succeed him, and after two more terms Madison secured the nomination of his Secretary of State, James Monroe. Many in the North already were muttering against this succession of Virginians, the so-called Virginia Dynasty, yet the Republicans had no difficulty in electing their candidate in the remarkably listless campaign of 1816. Monroe received 183 ballots in the electoral college, his opponent, Rufus King of New York, only 34, from the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Delaware.

At the time he became President, Monroe was sixty-one years old. Tall and dignified, he wore the old-fashioned garb of his youthful

days, including knee-length pantaloons and white-topped boots. He had reached the peak of a long and varied career as Revolutionary soldier, diplomat, and cabinet officer. Although when young he had been regarded as impulsive and changeable, he now was noted for his caution and patience. He was neither so subtle nor so original as his gifted predecessors from Virginia, Jefferson and Madison, yet he was more able than posterity generally has considered him. He had a mind of his own, and he was the master of his administration, even though he picked a group of exceptionally strong men for his advisers.

In choosing his cabinet, Monroe intended to recognize and harmonize the major interests of the country. For the first and most important position, that of secretary of state, he selected the New Englander and former Federalist, John Quincy Adams. This choice was significant in view of the well-established custom that made the State Department a stepping stone to the presidency. Monroe appeared to be announcing that he would be the last of the Virginia Dynasty and that the next President (after a second term for Monroe) would be a Massachusetts man. For secretary of war, Monroe



#### James Monroe

When Monroe was governor of Virginia (1799-1802) an acquaintance said of him "To be plain, there is often in his manner an inartificial and even an awkward simplicity which, while it provokes the smile of a more polished person, forces him to the opinion that Mr. Monroe is a man of most sincere and artless soul." In 1825, when Monroe was in his last year as President, a Virginia lady gave her impression of him after attending a New Year's reception at the White House "From the frank, honest expression of his eye I think he well deserves the encomium passed upon him by the great Jefferson, who said, Monroe is so honest that if you turned his soul inside out there would not be a spot on it." The portrait here reproduced was done by Gilbert Stuart, who painted portraits of all the men who served as President during his lifetime—Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams (The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts).

chose the forceful South Carolinian, John C. Calhoun, after Henry Clay had declined the office, preferring to continue as Speaker of the House.

Soon after his inauguration Monroe did what no other President since Washington had done: he made a goodwill tour through the country, eastward to New England, westward as far as Detroit. In New England, so recently the scene of rabid Federalist discontent, he was greeted everywhere with enthusiastic demonstrations. The *Columbian Centinel*, a Federalist newspaper of Boston, commenting on the "Presidential Jubilee" in that city, observed that an "era of good feelings" had arrived. This phrase soon became popular; it spread throughout the country, and eventually it came to be almost synonymous with the presidency of Monroe.

There was a good deal of hidden irony in this phrase of 1817, for the "good feelings" did not last long, and the period over which Monroe presided turned into one of very bad feelings indeed. Yet he was reelected in 1820 with the nearest thing to a unanimous electoral vote that any presidential candidate, with the exception of George Washington, has ever had. Indeed, all but one of the electors cast their ballots for Monroe. The lone dissenter, a strong-minded Yankee from New Hampshire who thought Monroe unfit for the presidency, voted for John Quincy Adams. The Federalists had not even bothered to put up an opposing candidate.

## FLORIDA AND THE FAR WEST

The first big problem facing John Quincy Adams as Secretary of State was that of Florida. Already the United States had annexed West Florida, but Spain still claimed the whole of the province, East and West, and actually held most of it, though with a grasp too feeble to stop the abuses against which Americans long had complained—the escape of slaves across the border in one direction, the marauding of Indians across it in the other. In 1817 Adams began negotiations with the Spanish minister, Don Luis de Onís, for acquiring all of Florida (or rather for acquiring that part of it which the United States did not already claim). Talks between the cantankerous puritan and

the wily don progressed haltingly, then were broken off when the hot-tempered Andrew Jackson took matters forcefully into his own hands.

Jackson, in command of American troops along the Florida frontier, had orders from Secretary of War Calhoun to "adopt the necessary measures" to end the border troubles. Jackson also had an unofficial hint—or so he afterward claimed—that the administration would not mind if he undertook a punitive expedition into Spanish territory. At any rate he invaded Florida, seized the Spanish forts at St. Marks and Pensacola, and ordered the hanging of two British subjects on the charge of supplying the Indians and inciting them to hostilities. News of these events provoked a sharp discussion behind the scenes in Monroe's cabinet. Calhoun and others insisted that the general should be punished or at least reprimanded for exceeding his authority, but Adams defended Jackson so ably as to prevent any action against him.

Instead of blaming Jackson or disavowing the raid, Adams wished the government to assume complete responsibility for it, for he saw in it a chance to further his Florida diplomacy. Rejecting a Spanish protest, he demanded reparations from Spain to pay the cost of the expedition, though he did not press this demand. He pointed out that Spain had promised in Pinckney's Treaty to restrain the Indians in her territory but had failed to live up to her treaty obligations. The United States, he argued, was justified by international law in taking drastic measures for self-defense. He implied that this country would be justified in going even farther than it had done.

Jackson's raid demonstrated that the United States, if it tried, could easily take Florida by force, unless Spain could get aid from some other power. The only power to which she could look was Great Britain.

Unable to obtain British support, Spain had little choice but to come to terms with the United States, though the resourceful Onís made the most of a bad situation for his country. In the treaty of 1819 it was agreed that the King of Spain should cede "all the territories which belong to him situated to the eastward of the Mississippi and known by the name of East and West Florida." This ambiguous wording was used so as to evade the troublesome ques-

tion whether Spain was ceding both East and West Florida or whether West Florida already belonged to the United States. In return the United States assumed the claims of its citizens against the Spanish government to the amount of \$5 million. This money was to be paid to American citizens, not to the Spanish government: we did not "purchase" Florida, as is sometimes said. The United States also gave up its claims to Texas, and Spain her claims to territory north of the forty-second parallel from the Rockies to the Pacific. Thus a line was drawn from the Gulf of Mexico northwestward across the continent delimiting the Spanish empire and transferring to the United States the Spanish title to the West Coast north of California. Adams and Onís had concluded something more than a Florida agreement: it was a "transcontinental treaty."

President Monroe, with the approval of the Senate, promptly ratified the treaty, but the coming of a revolution delayed ratification by Spain. The treaty finally went into effect in 1821. Thereafter the whole of Florida was, without question, territory belonging to the United States. And for the first time the area of the Louisiana Purchase had a definite southwestern boundary.

At the time of his negotiations with Onís, Adams showed much more interest in the Far West than did most of his fellow countrymen. Few Americans were familiar with the Oregon coast except for New Englanders engaged in Pacific whaling or in the China trade. Only the fur traders and trappers knew intimately any of the land between the Missouri and the Pacific. Before the War of 1812 John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company had established Astoria as a trading post at the mouth of the Columbia River. But when war came Astor sold his interests to the Northwestern Fur Company, a British concern operating from Canada, and after the war he centered his own operations in the Great Lakes area, from which he eventually extended them westward to the Rockies. Manuel Lisa's Missouri Fur Company, founded in 1809, with headquarters in St. Louis, sent traders and supplies up the Missouri and its tributaries and brought back peltries obtained from the Indians. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company, which Andrew Henry and William Henry Ashley organized in 1822, pushed the trade farther north and west and revolution-

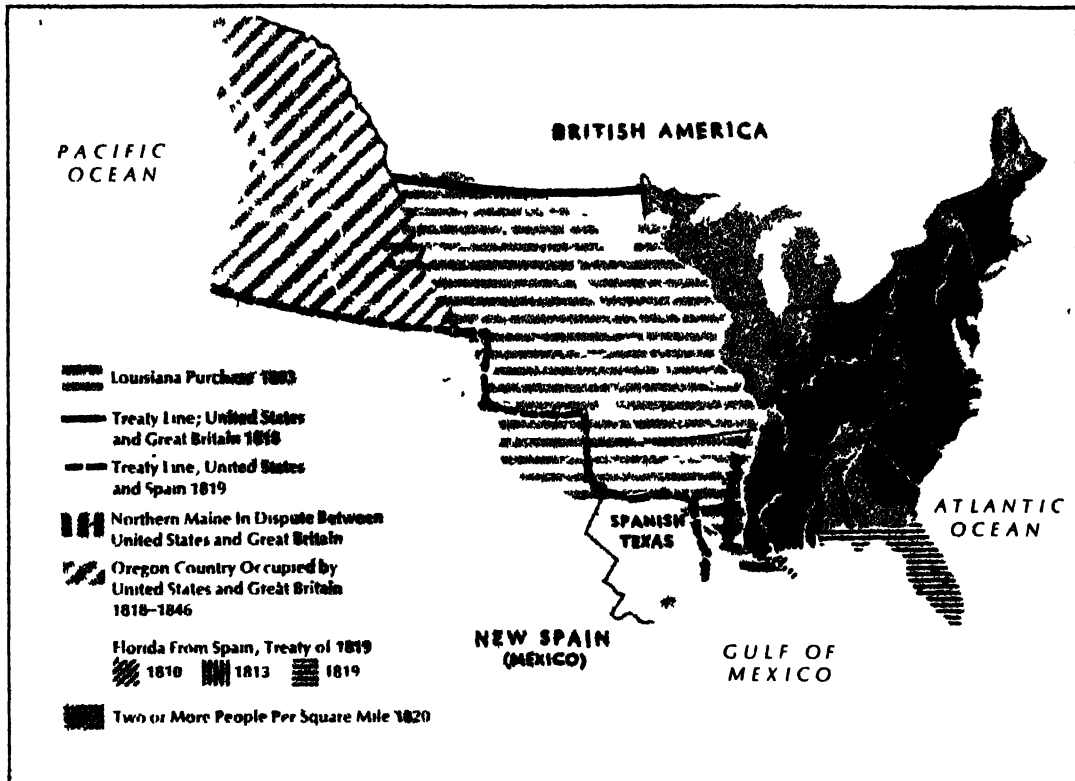
ized the business by sending out white trappers who procured their furs directly and brought them to an annual "rendezvous" in the mountains to be sold to the company's agents.

The trappers or "mountain men," notably Jedediah S. Smith, explored the Far West and gained an intimate knowledge of it, but they did not write books. General information about the region was increased in consequence of the explorations of Major Stephen H. Long. In 1819 and 1820, with instructions from the War Department to find the sources of the Red River, Long with nineteen soldiers ascended the Platte and South Platte rivers, discovered the peak named for him, and returned eastward by way of the Arkansas River, but failed to find the headwaters of the Red. "In regard to this extensive section of country between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains," Long said in his report, "we do not hesitate in giving the opinion that it is almost wholly unfit for cultivation, and of course uninhabitable by a people depending upon agriculture for their subsistence." On the published map of his expedition the Great Plains were marked as the "Great American Desert." Thus he gave increased currency to the idea earlier put forth by Pike that the farming frontier would run against a great natural barrier beyond the Missouri. Meanwhile the vacant lands to the east, between the Appalachians and the Mississippi, were rapidly being converted into plantations and farms.

## **THE GREAT MIGRATION**

One of the central themes of American history, for nearly three centuries after the founding of Jamestown, was the movement of population from the Atlantic coast to the interior and ultimately across the continent. This was no steady march, uniform along a broad front. It proceeded in irregular waves, following the lines of greatest attraction and least resistance, and accelerating in times of prosperity and peace. A sudden surge, greater than any preceding it, swept westward during the boom years that followed the War of 1812.

Weakened though it had been, the Indian threat still had to be taken into account. In a series of treaties forced upon the tribes after 1815, the federal government resumed the poli-



### Boundary Settlements 1818-1819

cy of compelling the redmen to choose between settling down as civilized farmers and migrating beyond the Mississippi. Along the Great Lakes and the upper Mississippi a chain of stockaded forts was erected to protect the frontier. A "factory" system, by which government factors or agents traded with the Indians, supplying them with goods at cost, was instituted in an effort to drive out of business the Canadian traders who persisted in carrying on their activities on American soil. After several years the government factories were abandoned because of the opposition of American fur companies who objected to government competition with private enterprise. By that time the Canadian traders had retreated across the border, and foreign influence over the American tribes finally came to an end.

The land abandoned by the Indians in the Northwest had been richly favored by nature, though its qualities were not entirely recog-

nized by the early pioneers. Over most of the Northwest extended the great primeval forest, but in central Illinois the forest gave way to a grand prairie billowing with wild grass as tall as six feet. The first settlers avoided this treeless stretch, for they saw unfamiliar problems in its tough sod and scarcity of wood, and they little knew the productivity of its black loam.

"Old America seems to be breaking up and moving westward," remarked an Englishman who joined the throng. Some were Kentucky and Tennessee frontiersmen, restless spirits who had begun to feel crowded as their states became increasingly populous. Others were small farmers from the back country of Virginia and the Carolinas who fled the encroachment of slavery and the plantation system. Still others came from the middle states, New England, and foreign countries, but the great majority were Southerners. Whatever the starting point, the Ohio River was for most of the mi-



**From Forest to Farm**

*First (top left), a clearing is begun and a rude cabin is built. The stream remains unbridged and has to be forded. Second (bottom left), the cabin is fenced in (note the "worm" fence), more trees are cut, stumps are burned, a small crop is put in, and the stream is spanned by a log bridge. Third (top right), the cabin is enlarged,*



a barn is built, the fencing is improved, fields are widened, and a bridge is erected. Finally (bottom right), all trace of the wilderness is gone, an imposing house has replaced the cabin, a village has grown up nearby, and an arched stone bridge has been built. These illustrations are from O. Turner, *Pioneer History of the Holland Land Purchase of Western New York* (1850).

grants the main route, the "grand track," until the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. They took the turnpike to Pittsburgh or the National Road to Wheeling and thus reached the river, or they took one of its tributaries such as the Kanawha, the Cumberland, or the Tennessee. Downstream they floated on flatboats bearing all their worldly goods. Then, leaving the Ohio at Cincinnati or at some place farther down, they pressed on overland with wagons, handcarts, packhorses, cattle, and hogs.

Once having arrived at his destination, preferably in the spring or early summer, the settler built a lean-to or cabin for his family, then hewed a clearing out of the forest and put in a crop of corn to supplement the wild game he caught and the domestic animals he had brought with him.

These frontier folk knew loneliness and poverty and dirt, suffered much from the forest fevers and from malnutrition, commonly had a lean and sallow look. Yet they were on the whole remarkably proud, bold, and independent. They were "half wild and wholly free."

To the Southwest moved people from Kentucky, from Tennessee, and from as far away as New England. Most numerous among the settlers on the Southern frontier, however, were farmers and planters from the South Atlantic states, especially from the piedmont of Georgia and the Carolinas. Their motive for migrating was, in a word, cotton. With the spread of cotton cultivation throughout the uplands of the older South, the soil there lost much of its natural fertility from repeated croppings, or washed away as torrential rains gullied the hillsides. Seeking fresh soil with a climate suitable for cotton, the planters naturally looked to the Southwest, around the end of the Appalachian range, where there stretched a broad zone within which cotton could thrive. Included in this zone was the Black Belt of central Alabama and Mississippi, a prairie with a fabulously productive soil of rotted limestone.

The advance of the Southern frontier meant the spread of cotton and slavery. Usually the first arrivals were ordinary frontiersmen like those farther north, small farmers who made rough clearings in the forest. Then came planters who bought up the cleared or partially cleared land, while the original settlers moved on west and started over again. As

a rule the planters made the westward journey in a style quite different from that of the other pioneers. Over the alternately dusty and muddy roads came great caravans consisting of herds of livestock, wagonloads of household goods, long lines of slaves, and, bringing up the rear, the planter and his family riding in carriages. Soon the clearings expanded into vast fields white with cotton, and the cabins of the pioneers gave way to more sumptuous log dwellings and ultimately to imposing mansions that demonstrated the rise of a class of the newly rich.

Though by 1819 settlers already were pushing beyond the Mississippi, much of the area to the east of the river, around the Great Lakes and along the Gulf of Mexico, was yet to be occupied. Despite the gaps in settlement, the population of the Mississippi Valley had increased far more rapidly than that of the nation as a whole. The census of 1810 indicated that only one American in seven lived to the west of the Appalachian Mountains; the census of 1820, almost one in four. During the immediate postwar years four new states were created in this region—Indiana (1816), Mississippi (1817), Illinois (1818), and Alabama (1819). Meanwhile Missouri had grown populous enough for statehood, and the struggle over her admission indicated how important, politically and otherwise, the West was becoming in the eyes of the rest of the nation. For the time being, however, the westward movement was slowed down by the onset of the depression following the Panic of 1819.

### THE PANIC OF 1819

In part the Panic of 1819 was a delayed reaction to the War of 1812 and to the preceding years of warfare in Europe. Since 1793 the continual fighting had drawn manpower from European fields, disrupted business as well as agriculture, and created an abnormal demand for the produce of American plantations and farms. The whole period was one of exceptionally high prices for American producers, and though some prices fell with the decline of trade in 1814, they recovered with the resumption of exports to Europe after the war.



**Public Lands:  
Terms  
of Sale  
[1785-1820]**

**Ordinance of 1785** Allowed a minimum purchase of 640 acres and set a minimum price of \$1 an acre. Made no provision for credit.

**Act of 1796** Raised the minimum price to \$2 an acre but allowed a year's credit on half of the amount due.

**Act of 1800** Reduced the minimum purchase from 640 to 320 acres and extended credit to four years, with a down payment of one-fourth of the whole amount and three later installments

**Act of 1804** Further reduced the minimum purchase to 160 acres.

(Now a man with as little as \$80 on hand could obtain a farm from the government, although he would still owe \$240 to be paid within four years.)

**Act of 1820** Reduced the minimum purchase still further, to 80 acres, and the minimum price to \$1 25 an acre, but abolished the credit system.

**NOTE:** Under each of these laws, the land was first offered for sale at auction, and much of it sold for more than the minimum price.

Rising prices for farm products stimulated a land boom in the United States, particularly in the West. After the war the government land offices did a bigger business than ever before; not for twenty years were they to do as good a business again. In 1815 sales totaled about a million acres and in 1819 more than 5 million. Many settlers bought on credit: under the land laws of 1800 and 1804 they could pay as little as \$80 down, and they hoped to raise the remaining three installments within four years from the proceeds of their farming. Speculators bought large tracts of choice land, hoping to resell it at a profit to incoming settlers. At the land-office auctions, bidding became so spirited that much of the public land sold for prices far above the minimum of \$2 an acre, some in the Black Belt of Alabama and Mississippi going for \$100 and more. Still higher prices sometimes were paid by optimistic real-estate promoters who laid out town sites, even in swamps, and expected to make fortunes through the sale of city lots. Until 1817 neither the settlers nor the speculators needed hard cash to buy government land: they could borrow from the state banks and pay the government with banknotes.

Even after the refounding of the Bank of the United States in 1817, wildcat banks continued to provide easy credit for a few years. In-

deed, the United States Bank itself at first offered easy loans. Then in 1819, under new management, it suddenly began to tighten up. It called in loans and foreclosed mortgages, acquiring thousands of acres of mortgaged land in the West. It gathered up state banknotes and presented them to the state banks for payment in cash. Having little money on hand, many of these banks closed their doors. Most of the rest soon had to follow suit, for they were beset by depositors with notes to be cashed. The panic was on.

Six years of depression followed. Prices fell rapidly. With the prices of farm products so low, those settlers buying land on credit could not hope to keep up their payments. Some stood to lose everything—their land, their improvements on it, their homes. They demanded relief from their congressmen, and Congress responded with the land law of 1820 and the relief act of 1821. The new land law abolished the credit system, but lowered the minimum price from \$2.00 to \$1.25 and the minimum tract from 160 to 80 acres. Hereafter a purchaser would have to buy his farm outright, but he could get one for as little as \$100. The relief act allowed a previous buyer to pay off his debt at the reduced price, to accept the reduced acreage and apply the payments to it, and to have more time to meet his installments.

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\*Titles available in paperback



# Sectionalism and Patriotism





## Nine

The westward movement of population led, five years after the end of the War of 1812, to a sectional crisis. The specific question was whether Missouri should be admitted as a slaveholding state, but also involved was the larger question whether the North or the South should control the rising West. Though the Missouri controversy was settled by a compromise, the spirit of sectionalism persisted, awaiting other occasions to flare up.

For the time being, however, there were countervailing forces of nationalism. The ideal of a strong national government was vigorously reasserted in the Supreme Court decisions of Chief Justice John Marshall (though these provoked widespread criticism, especially in the South) and in the foreign policies of President James Monroe. Significantly, both Marshall and Monroe were Southerners. National unity was further strengthened by the revival of the system of two political parties, each of which had members in all parts of the country, so that partisan lines cut across and weakened sectional divisions. Meanwhile, an eventual economic basis for national unity was promised by improvements in transportation—canals and railroads—which began to link the coastal cities with the interior, the East with the West. Business could now be conducted on something approaching a truly nationwide scale.

Still another bond of union was the heritage of patriotism, the heroic memories of the Revolution, annually recalled with fife and drum and flamboyant speechmaking on the Fourth of July. The War of 1812 was too recent for the unpatriotic factionalism it had engendered to be entirely forgotten, but the earlier war with Great Britain, as it receded into the past, was more and more suffused with a haze of heroic legend. When General Lafayette, the French hero of the Revolution, revisited the United States in 1824–1825, the glorious past was revived as never before. Everywhere the beloved general went, crowds without

### **Fourth of July 1819**

*The public celebration in Center Square, Philadelphia, as shown in this detail from a painting by J. L. Krimmel, was typical of Independence Day festivities throughout the country. Here militiamen parade, women prepare picnic lunches, and some of the men get drunk. (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania)*

distinction of section or party cheered him in frenzied celebrations

The Revolutionary heritage was most dramatically brought home to the American people by news of the deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and Adams, "its ablest advocate and defender" (as Jefferson said)

who at one time were bitter political rivals, had become friendly correspondents in their old age. They died on the same day, and that day was July 4, 1826, exactly half a century after the adoption of the Declaration. To some, this appeared to be more than a coincidence, perhaps a sign from God instructing the American people to cherish the nationality their ancestors had so dearly won

## The Canal Age

More than ever, with the improvements in transportation and the broadening of business, each part of the country could concentrate on the production of a particular kind of goods, since it could depend upon other parts of the country to buy its surplus and supply its needs. This geographical specialization made the East and the West, the North and the South, increasingly interdependent, though at the same time it also intensified differences of economic interest and thus accounted for much of the persisting sectionalism in politics.

### THE PEOPLE 1820-1840

During the 1820s and 1830s, as during the whole of American history, three trends of population were fairly obvious: rapid increase, migration to the West, and movement to towns and cities.

Americans continued to multiply almost as fast as in the colonial period, the population still doubling every twenty-five years or so. The total figure, lower than 4 million in 1790, approached 10 million by 1820 and rose to nearly 13 million in 1830 and to about 17 million in 1840. The United States was growing much more rapidly in population than the British Isles or Europe: by 1860 it had gone ahead of the United Kingdom and had nearly overtaken Germany and France.

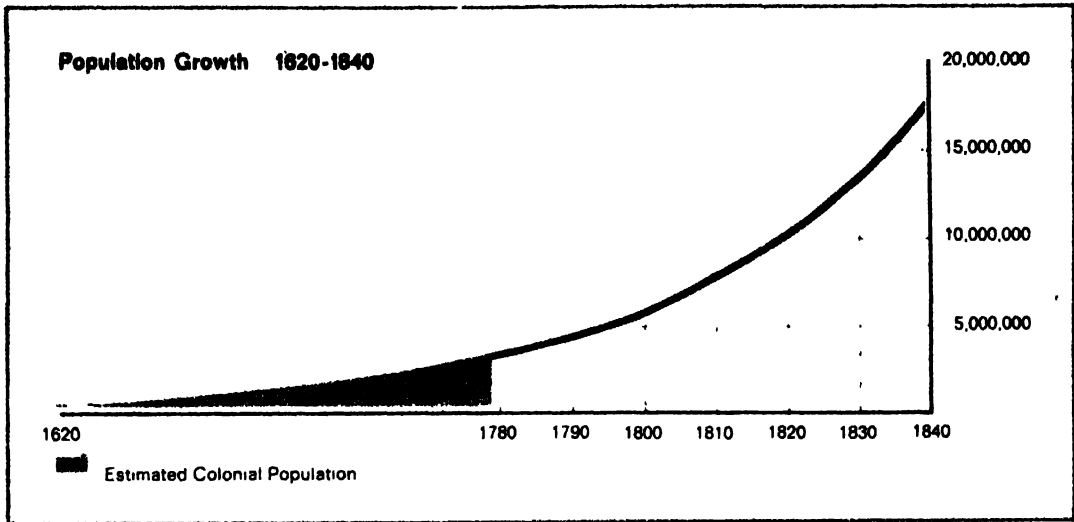
The Negro population increased more slowly than the white. After 1808, when the importation of slaves was made illegal, the proportion of blacks to whites in the nation as a whole steadily declined. In 1820 there was one Negro to every four whites; in 1840, one to

every five. The slower increase of Negroes was due to their comparatively high death rate, not to a low birth rate. Slave mothers had large families, but life was shorter for both slaves and free Negroes than for whites.

The mortality rate for whites slowly declined. Public health improved a little, though epidemics continued to take their periodic toll, among them a cholera plague that swept the country in 1832. On the average, people lived somewhat longer than in earlier generations. The population increase, however, was due less to lengthened life than to the maintenance of a high birth rate, which more than offset the death rate.

Immigration accounted for little of the population growth before the 1840s. The long years of war in Europe, from 1793 to 1815, had kept the number of newcomers to America down to not more than a few thousand a year, and then the Panic of 1819 checked the immigrant tide that had risen after Waterloo. During the 1820s arrivals from abroad averaged about 14,000 annually. Of the total population of nearly 13 million in 1830, the foreign-born numbered less than 500,000, mostly naturalized citizens. Soon immigration began to grow, reaching a total of 60,000 for 1832 and nearly 80,000 for 1837.

Since the United States exported more goods than it imported, returning ships often had vacant space and filled it with immigrants as ballast, so to speak. Competition among shipping lines reduced fares so that, by the 1830s, the immigrant could get passage across the Atlantic for as little as \$20 or \$30. No longer did he need to sell his services to a temporary



*The United States was the first country to undertake a complete and periodic population count, beginning with the census of 1790. From 1790 to 1840 the American population grew, by actual count, from a little less than 4 million to a little more than 17 million. Meanwhile the world population grew, according to estimate, from about 700 million to more than 1 billion. During this period the population of the United States was increasing by about 3 per cent a year, that of the United Kingdom less than 1 per cent, and that of France less than one-half of 1 per cent.*

master in America in order to pay for the voyage. And so the system of indentured servitude, which had dwindled steadily after the Revolution, disappeared entirely after the Panic of 1819.

Until the 1830s most of the new arrivals came from the same sources as had come the bulk of the colonial population—from England and the northern counties of Ireland. In the 1830s, however, the number arriving from the southern counties of Ireland began to grow, anticipating the tremendous influx of Irishmen that was to occur in the next two decades. Generally the newcomers, the Irish as well as others, were welcomed in the United States. They were needed to provide labor for building canals and railroads, manning ships and docks, and performing other heavy work essential to the expanding economic system. But the Irish, as Roman Catholics, excited Protestant prejudices in some communities. In 1834 an anti-Catholic mob set fire to a convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts, and the next year Samuel F. B. Morse (who is better remem-

bered as a portrait painter and as the inventor of the telegraph) published his *Foreign Conspiracy*, which served thereafter as a textbook for nativists crusading against what they imagined was a popish plot to gain control of the United States. Still, the federal government did nothing to check immigration, and shipowners, employers, and some of the states took measures to encourage it.

The West (including both Northwest and Southwest) continued to grow much more rapidly than the rest of the country. By 1830 more than a fourth of the American people lived to the west of the Appalachians; by 1850, nearly a half. Some of the seaboard states suffered serious losses of manpower and womanpower, not to mention the personal property that departing migrants took away. Year after year the Carolinas gave up nearly as much in human resources as they gained by natural increase; their populations remained almost stationary. The same was true of Vermont and New Hampshire. Many a village in these two states was completely depopulated, its houses and

barns left to rot, as its people scattered over the country in search of an easier life than the granite hills afforded.

Not all the migrating villagers and farmers sought the unsettled frontier: some moved instead to increasingly crowded population centers. Cities (considered as communities of 8,000 or more) grew faster than the nation as a whole. In 1820 there were more than twice as many cities, and in 1840 more than seven times as many, as there had been in 1790. While the vast majority of Americans continued to reside in the open country or in small towns, the number of city dwellers increased remarkably. In 1790 one person in thirty lived in a community of 8,000 or more; in 1820, one in twenty; and in 1840, one in twelve.

The rise of New York City was phenomenal. By 1810 it had surpassed Philadelphia, which earlier had replaced Boston as the largest city in America. New York steadily increased its lead in both population and trade. Its growth was based on the possession of a superior natural harbor and on several historical developments after the War of 1812. After the war the British chose New York as the chief place to "dump" their manufactured goods and thus helped make it an import center. State laws, which were liberal with regard to auction sales, encouraged inland merchants to do their buying in New York. The first packet line, with regularly scheduled monthly sailings between England and the United States, made New York its American terminus (1816) and hence a more important center of overseas commerce than ever. And the Erie Canal (completed in 1825) gave the city unrivaled access to the interior.

### NEW WATERWAYS

Despite the road improvements of the turnpike era (1790-1830) Americans continued as in colonial times to depend wherever possible on water routes for travel and transportation. The larger rivers, especially the Mississippi and the Ohio, became increasingly useful as steamboats grew in number and improved in design.

A special kind of steamboat evolved to meet the problems of navigation on the Mississippi and its tributaries. These waters were shallow, with strong and tricky currents, shift-

ing bars of sand and mud, and submerged logs and trees. So the boat had to have a flat bottom, paddle wheels rather than screw propellers, and a powerful, high-pressure engine, which meant a dangerously explosive one. To accommodate as much cargo and as many passengers as possible, the boat was triple-decked, its superstructure rising high in the air. Such a "floating palace" at its best was an impressive sight, elaborately ornamented with gilt and "gingerbread."

River boats carried to New Orleans the corn and other crops of Northwestern farmers, the cotton and tobacco of Southwestern planters. From New Orleans, ships took the cargoes on to Eastern ports. Neither the farmers of the West nor the merchants of the East were completely satisfied with this pattern of trade. Farmers could get better prices for their crops if the alternative existed of sending them directly eastward to market, and merchants could sell larger quantities of their manufactured goods if these could be transported more directly and more economically to the West.

True, the highways across the mountains, such as the Philadelphia-Pittsburgh turnpike and the National Road, provided a partial solution to the problem. But the costs of hauling goods overland, though lower than before these roads were built, were too high for anything except the most compact and valuable merchandise. New waterways were needed in addition to highways. It was calculated that four horses could pull a wagon weight of one ton twelve miles a day over an ordinary road and one and a half tons eighteen miles a day over a turnpike. On the other hand, four horses could draw a boatload of a hundred tons twenty-four miles a day on a canal.

Sectional jealousies and constitutional scruples stood in the way of action by the federal government, and necessary expenditures were too great for private enterprise. If extensive canals were to be dug, the job would be up to the various states.

New York was the first to act. It had the natural advantage of a comparatively level route between the Hudson River and Lake Erie, through the only break in the entire Appalachian chain. Yet the engineering tasks were imposing. The distance was more than 350 miles, several times as long as any of the existing canals in America, and there were



ridges to cross and a wilderness of woods and swamps to penetrate. For many years New Yorkers debated whether the scheme was practical. The canal advocates finally won the debate after De Witt Clinton, a late but ardent convert to the cause, was elected governor. Digging began on the Fourth of July, 1817.

This, the Erie Canal, was by far the greatest construction job that Americans ever had undertaken, and it was the work of self-made engineers. Though one of them made a careful study of English canals, he and his associates did more than merely copy what he saw abroad. They devised ingenious arrangements

of cables, pulleys, and gears for bringing down trees and uprooting stumps. Instead of the usual shovels and wheelbarrows, they used specially designed plows and scrapers for moving earth. To make watertight locks they produced an ideal cement from native limestone. The canal itself was simply a big ditch, forty feet wide and four feet deep, with towpaths along the bank for the horses or mules that were to draw the canal boats. (Steamboats were not to be used: the churning of a paddle wheel or propeller would cave in the earthen banks.) Cuts and fills, some of them enormous, enabled the canal to pass through hills and over valleys;

#### New York Port 1828

*A view of South Street, from the intersection with Maiden Lane, which got its name from the fact that Dutch washermaids in New Amsterdam used to come here to do their laundry in a brook outside of town. The East River docks lined South Street, there were other docks along the Hudson River on the opposite side of Manhattan Island. Below Maiden Lane, the city by 1828 was almost solidly built up. Above the Lane, there were gardens around the houses, and there were vacant lots which in some cases ran out into open fields. In summer boys swam nude in the East River. The population of the city was approaching 150,000. Note the cobblestone pavement. From a contemporary print. (Courtesy of the New York Public Library, Stokes Collection)*





### **The Erie Canal**

*Canal boats, loaded with migrants on their way to the West arrive at the landing at Little Falls, New York. Note the tandem team of horses on the towpath. The boats moved so slowly that passengers could lighten their tedium from time to time by getting off and walking alongside. From a contemporary pencil sketch. (Courtesy of the New York Historical Society, New York City)*

stone aqueducts carried it across streams, and eighty-eight locks, of heavy masonry, with great wooden gates, took care of the necessary ascents and descents.

Not only was the Erie Canal an engineering triumph; it quickly proved a financial success as well. It was opened for through traffic in October 1825, with fitting ceremonies. Governor Clinton at the head of a parade of canal boats made the trip from Buffalo to the Hudson and then downriver to New York City, where he emptied a keg of Erie water into the Atlantic to symbolize the wedding of the lake and the ocean. Soon traffic was so heavy that, within about seven years, the tolls brought in enough

to repay the whole construction cost. The prosperity of the Erie encouraged the state to enlarge its canal system by building several branches. An important part of the system was the Champlain Canal, begun at about the same time as the Erie and completed in 1822, which connected Lake Champlain with the Hudson River. Though some of the branches did not pay for themselves, they provided useful water connections between New York City and the larger towns of the state. The main line, giving access to Lake Erie as it did, led beyond the state's borders, to the West.

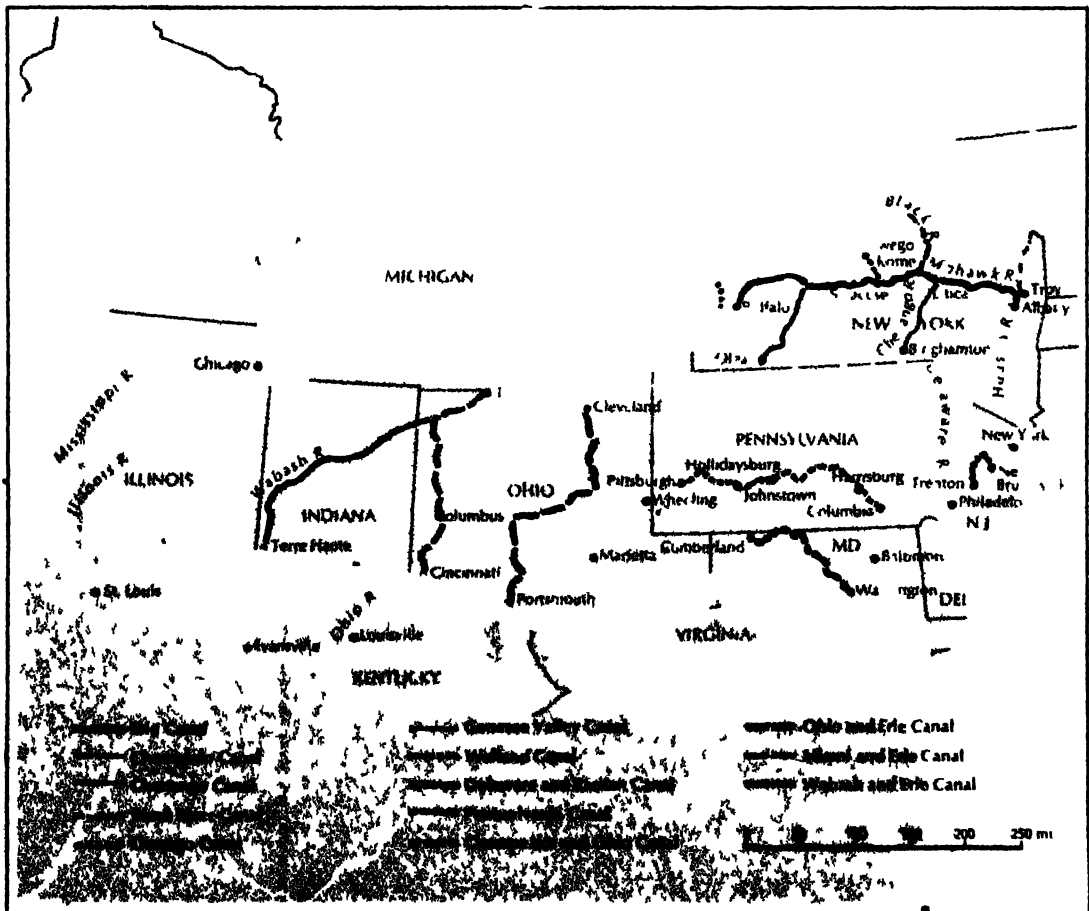
The range of the New York canal system was still further extended when the states of

Ohio and Indiana, inspired by the success of the Erie Canal, provided water connections between Lake Erie and the Ohio River. In 1825 Ohio began the building of two canals, one between Portsmouth and Cleveland and the other between Cincinnati and Toledo, both of which were in use by 1833. In 1832 Indiana started the construction of a canal that was to connect Evansville with the Cincinnati-Toledo route. These canals made it possible to ship or to travel by inland waterways all the way from New York to New Orleans, though several changes among canal, lake, and river craft would be necessary. By way of the Great Lakes it was possible to go by water from New York to Chicago. After the opening of the Erie

Canal, shipping on the Great Lakes by sail and steam rapidly increased.

The consequences of the development of this transportation network were far-reaching. One of the immediate results was the stimulation of the settlement of the Northwest, not only because it had become easier for migrants to make the westward journey but also, and more important, because it had become easier for them, after taking up their farms, to ship their produce to markets. Towns boomed along the Erie and other canals, New York City benefiting the most of all. Though much of the Western produce, especially corn, continued to go downriver to New Orleans, an increasing proportion of it and most of the wheat of the North

### Canals in the Northeast 1840



west went toward New York. And manufactured goods now went in growing volume from New York by the comparatively direct and economical new routes to the West.

Rival cities along the Atlantic seaboard took alarm at the prospect of New York's acquiring so vast a hinterland, largely at their expense. If they were to hold their own, they too must find ways of tapping the Western market. Boston, remote from the West, her way to the Hudson River impeded by the Berkshire Hills, seemed out of the running, at least so far as a canal was concerned. Philadelphia and Baltimore, though they had the still more formidable Allegheny Mountains to contend with, did not give up without an effort at canal building. Beginning in 1834, the commonwealth of Pennsylvania invested in a complicated and costly system of waterways and railways—with an arrangement of "inclined planes," stationary engines, and cable cars to take canal boats over the mountains—intending thus to connect Philadelphia with Pittsburgh. This "Pennsylvania system" proved a failure, financially and otherwise. From Baltimore a canal was projected to ascend the Potomac Valley and tunnel through the mountains, thus achieving essentially the same object as George Washington once had hoped to accomplish. The digging of this grandly conceived Chesapeake and Ohio Canal began in 1828, but it never got farther west than Cumberland. In the South, Richmond and Charleston also aspired to reach the Ohio Valley; Richmond, planning at first to join the James and the Kanawha rivers, eventually saw a canal built as far as Lynchburg.

For none of these rivals of New York did canals provide a satisfactory way to the West. Some cities, however, saw their opportunity in a different and newer means of transportation. Before the canal age had reached its height, the era of the railroad already was beginning.

### THE FIRST RAILROADS

It is hard to date the beginning of railroads, since they resulted from a combination of different elements, each of which had a separate history. One of these was the use of rails, wooden or iron, laid on a prepared roadbed to make a fairly straight and level track. Another was

the employment of steam-powered locomotives, and a third was the operation of trains as public carriers of passengers and freight. For nearly 200 years before the nineteenth century opened, railways with cars pulled by men (and women) or by animals had been used to haul coal from English mines, and in the early 1800s similar railways appeared in the United States. By 1804 both English and American inventors had experimented with steam engines for propelling land vehicles as well as boats. In 1820 John Stevens ran a locomotive and cars around a circular track on his New Jersey estate. Finally, in 1825, the Stockton and Darlington Railroad in England began to operate with steam power over a short length of track and to carry general traffic.

This news quickly aroused the interest of American businessmen, especially in those seaboard cities that sought better communications with the West. First to organize a railroad company was a group of New Yorkers, who in 1826 obtained a charter for the Mohawk and Hudson and five years later began running trains the sixteen miles between Schenectady and Albany. First to begin actual operations was the Baltimore and Ohio; the only living signer of the Declaration of Independence, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, dug a spadeful of earth in the ceremonies to start the work on July 4, 1828, and a thirteen-mile stretch opened for business in 1830. In that same year the Charleston and Hamburg ran trains over a segment of its track in South Carolina; when this line was completed, in 1833, it was the longest in the world (136 miles). The next year the commonwealth of Pennsylvania finished its line from Philadelphia to the Susquehanna River as part of the "Pennsylvania system" of rail and waterways. Meanwhile, in Massachusetts, three companies received charters for routes radiating out from Boston, the most important of these being the Western Railroad, which reached Worcester in 1836. Not only the seaboard but also the Mississippi Valley became the scene of railroad building. By 1836 a total of more than 1,000 miles of track had been laid in eleven states.

There did not yet exist what could be called a railroad system. Even the longest of the lines was comparatively short, and most of them served mainly to connect water routes and supplement water transportation.

## Traveling by Railroad [1835]

In her widely read work on *Society in America* (1836) the scholarly Englishwoman Harriet Martineau recalled railroad trips she had taken in South Carolina and Pennsylvania:

*My journeys on the Charleston and Augusta railroad were by far the most fatiguing of any I underwent in the country. The motion and the noise are distracting. Whether this is owing to its being on piles in many places, whether the fault is in the ground or the construction, I do not know. Almost all the railroad traveling in America is very fatiguing and noisy. . . .*

*One great inconvenience of the American railroads is that, from wood being used for fuel, there is an incessant shower of large sparks, destructive to dress and comfort, unless all the windows are shut, which is impossible in warm weather. Some serious accidents from fire have happened in this way; and during my last trip on the Columbia and Philadelphia railroad, a lady in the car had a shawl burned to destruction on her shoulders; and I found that my own gown had thirteen holes in it; and my veil, with which I saved my eyes, more than could be counted.*

During the 1830s the railroad underwent a rapid technological development. At first the track consisted of strap-iron rails laid on wooden stringers, which were anchored to granite blocks set in the ground, but this kind of track proved too rigid to absorb the shocks of actual use and was soon replaced by heavier iron rails on wooden ties ballasted with crushed rock. The tracks of different companies varied in width, so that when too different lines connected, the cars and engines of the one might not fit on the tracks of the other. In the early years experiments were made with various forms of motive power—horses, sails, and stationary steam engines with windlasses and cables (for steep grades), as well as steam locomotives. The very first locomotives were imported from England, but as early as 1830 engines of American manufacture like the Charleston and Hamburg's *Best Friend of Charleston* were put into use, and before long only American locomotives were used on American roads; some were even exported. Since railroads in this country were built with sharper curves and steeper grades, the locomotives had to be both more flexible and more powerful than in England. Passenger cars, originally mere stagecoaches adapted to rails, took the form of an elongated box with two rows of reversible seats and a

center aisle soon after 1840. Schedules were erratic and wrecks frequent, as the roadbeds and bridges were poorly constructed.

From the outset railroads and canals were bitter competitors. For a time the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company blocked the advance of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad through the narrow gorge of the upper Potomac, and the state of New York prohibited railroads from hauling freight in competition with the Erie Canal and its branches. But railroads had the advantages of speed and year-round operation (canals closed down for the winter freeze) and could be located almost anywhere, regardless of terrain and the availability of water. Where free competition existed, railroads took most of the passenger traffic and the light freight.

The future, in fact, belonged to the towns and cities along the path of the "iron horse," not to those that continued to depend exclusively upon waterways.

## BROADENING OF BUSINESS

While mills and factories multiplied, the household and the workshop slowly declined as producers of manufactured goods. In the textile industry the use of machinery and the dependence on water power (occasionally steam pow-

er) made it necessary to bring operations together under a single roof. Yet a good deal of spinning and weaving continued to be done in the home, either for sale or for home use. Though shoes were still made by hand and not by machines, shoe manufacture was increasingly the work of men and women who, in a careful division of labor, specialized in one or another of the various tasks. Mass-produced shoes, in ungraded sizes and without distinction as to rights or lefts, came in the 1830s chiefly from eastern Massachusetts and were bought mostly by frontier emigrants, sailors, and Southern planters, who used them for their slaves. Other people still made their own shoes or had them made to order by a cobbler. Iron came largely from Pennsylvania, where it was produced in furnaces using local sources of ore, limestone, and charcoal. Other furnaces were scattered over the country, however, and finished iron products were wrought in thousands of local blacksmith shops.

The expansion of business was not simply an automatic result of transportation improvements or other technological changes. It was also the result of daring and imagination on the part of businessmen and their employees. Two industries, one old and one new, illustrate the capacities of Yankee enterprise. One was the whaling industry, which was reaching its heyday in the 1830s. From New Bedford and other New England ports, bold skippers and their crews, having driven most of the whales from the Atlantic, voyaged far into the Pacific in their hazardous tracking of the source of spermaceti for candles, whale oil for lamps, and whalebone for corset stays and other uses. Another example of Yankee enterprise was the ice industry. Though for years Northeastern farmers had harvested winter ice from ponds and stored it for the summer, the large-scale transportation and sale of ice as a commodity began in the 1830s. The New England ice harvest then found a ready market in Northern cities, on Southern plantations, and around the world in India, where it was carried in fast-sailing ships; a voyage was considered highly successful if no more than half the cargo melted on the way.

The distribution of goods, whether of foreign or of domestic origin, continued to be rather haphazard by present-day standards, though it was becoming more and more sys-

tematic. Stores specializing in groceries, dry goods, hardware, or other lines appeared in the larger cities, but smaller towns and villages depended on the general store, like the one where Abraham Lincoln once clerked in New Salem, Illinois. The storekeeper did much of his business by barter, taking country eggs and other produce in exchange for such things as pins and needles, sugar and coffee. Many customers, living remote from any store, welcomed the occasional visits of the peddler, who came afoot or by horse, with his pack or with his peddler's wagon equipped with sloping sides which opened to reveal his racks of wares. A special variety of peddler, the Connecticut Yankee, toured the West and the South as a factory agent to sell clocks, at one time made of wood (including the works) but in the 1830s and after usually made of brass.

The organization of business was undergoing a gradual change. Most of it was, and continued to be, operated by individuals or partnerships operating on a small scale. The dominating figure was the great merchant capitalist, who owned and directed much of the big business of the time. He owned his own ships, and he organized certain industries—for example, that of shoe manufacturing—on the putting-out system, according to which he provided the materials, directed the work, and sold the finished product. In the larger enterprises, however, the individual merchant capitalist was giving way before the advance of the corporation. Corporations had the advantage of combining the resources of a large number of shareholders, but their development was long held back by handicapping laws. A corporation had to have a charter, granted by the state, and at first a special act of the legislature was required. By the 1830s the states were beginning to pass general incorporation laws according to which any group meeting certain requirements could secure a charter merely by paying a fee. Moreover, the laws began to grant the privilege of limited liability, which meant that the individual stockholder was liable only to the extent of losing the value of his stock if the corporation should fail.

Corporations made possible the accumulation of larger and larger amounts of capital for manufacturing enterprises as well as for banks, turnpikes, and railroad companies. Some of this capital came from the profits of wealthy

merchants who turned from shipping to newer ventures, some from the savings of men of only moderate means, and some from tax collections, since state governments often bought shares in turnpike, canal, and railroad companies. A considerable part was supplied by foreign, especially English, investors. From all these sources too little was derived to meet the demands of promoters with ambitious schemes of personal profit or community improvement. Hence the banks, which should have confined their long-term lending to the limit of their savings deposits, often were induced to issue excessive amounts of bank notes as a means of providing capital for expanding business ventures. As a result of this practice, bank failures were more frequent and bank deposits less secure than they might otherwise have been.

## WORKERS AND UNIONS

The growth of industry required labor as well as capital. From the colonial beginnings, labor had been scarce in America. At the opening of the nineteenth century nearly ninety of every one hundred Americans still lived and worked on the land; they were farmers. City workers were comparatively few, and many of them were skilled artisans who owned and managed their shops; they were small businessmen, not employees. There were also some unskilled laborers—longshoremen and the like—but there was no sizable reservoir of manpower for new industries to draw upon. In response to the needs of industry a considerable class of wage earners finally began to form. Its members came mostly from the marginal farms of

### Girls in Cotton Mills

*In cotton mills such as this one in Lowell, Massachusetts, about 1850 most of the employees were farm girls from the surrounding countryside who worked for a few years as factory hands and then returned to their homes to marry and settle down. With respect to Lowell, it was said "Visitors will be agreeably surprised by the neat and respectable appearance of the operatives of this industrious city, and equally so with their moral condition" (Prints Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations).*



the East (those farms least able to compete with the fertile fields of the West) and somewhat later from the British Isles and Europe.

In the textile mills two different methods of labor recruitment were used. One of these, which prevailed in the middle states and parts of New England, brought whole families to the mill. Father, mother, and children, even those no more than four or five years old, worked together in tending the looms. The second, the Waltham or Lowell system, which was common in Massachusetts, enlisted young women in their late teens and early twenties. These unmarried girls went from farms to factories to work for only a few years and returned, with their savings, to settle down as housewives. They did not form a permanent working class.

Labor conditions in American mills seemed very good in comparison with conditions in English factories and mines. Child labor, indispensable for supplementing the manpower supply, entailed fewer evils in the United States, where the working children remained under the control of their parents, than in England, where asylum authorities hired out orphans to factory employers. The lot of the working woman in mills like those of Lowell appeared idyllic in contrast with the plight of contemporary women who worked in British mines. A parliamentary investigation revealed that some of these unfortunates, naked and filthy, crawled on their hands and knees to pull coal carts through narrow tunnels. No wonder that English visitors considered Lowell a female paradise. The Lowell girls lived in pleasant boarding houses (much like college residence halls) where their morals were carefully supervised. They were well paid by the standards of the period. They found time to write and publish a monthly magazine, the *Lowell Offering*, even though working hours were long—from sunup to sundown six days a week. In the early days of the factory these hours seemed natural enough to people who were used to the daylong labor of the farm.

Much worse off were the construction gangs who performed the heavy, unskilled work on turnpikes, railroads, and canals. A large and growing number of these men were Irish immigrants. They received low pay and, since their work was seasonal and uncertain,

did not make enough in a year to maintain a family at what was generally considered a decent living standard; many of them lived in the most unhealthful of shanties. After about 1840 Irish men and women began to be employed in textile mills. As these newcomers replaced the native farm girls, the earlier paternalistic system broke down and working conditions deteriorated somewhat. Piece rates were paid instead of a daily wage; these and other devices were used to speed up production and exploit the labor force more efficiently.

Neither ditchdiggers nor mill hands, however, were the first to organize and act collectively to improve the conditions of their work. Skilled artisans formed the earliest labor unions and arranged the first strikes (shortly before 1800). From the 1790s on, the printers and cordwainers took the lead. The cordwainers—makers of high-quality boots and shoes, each man fashioning his entire product—suffered from the competition of merchant capitalists who put out work to be performed in separate tasks. These artisans sensed a loss of security and status with the development of mass-production methods, and so did members of other skilled trades, such as carpenters, joiners, masons, plasterers, hatters, and shipbuilders. In cities like Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, and New York, the skilled workers of each craft formed societies for mutual aid. During the 1820s and 1830s the craft societies began to combine on a city-wide basis and set up central organizations known as trade unions. Since, with the widening of the market, workers of one city competed with those at a distance, the next step was to federate the trade unions or to establish craft unions of national scope. In 1834 delegates from six cities founded the National Trades' Union, and in 1836 the printers and the cordwainers set up their own national craft unions.

This labor movement soon collapsed. Labor leaders struggled against the handicap of hostile laws and hostile courts. By the common law, as interpreted by judges in the industrial states, a combination among workers was viewed as, in itself, an illegal conspiracy. But adverse court decisions did not halt, though they handicapped, the rising unions. The death blow came from the Panic of 1837 and the ensuing depression.



## Sectional and National Trends

While the divisive spirit of sectionalism came to a head in the Missouri controversy, Chief Justice Marshall, in a series of his greatest decisions, was strengthening the national sovereignty against the rights of the states. In 1823, announcing what was later to be known as the Monroe Doctrine, the President appealed to patriotism with an assertion of American leadership in the Western Hemisphere against the pretensions of European powers.

### THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE

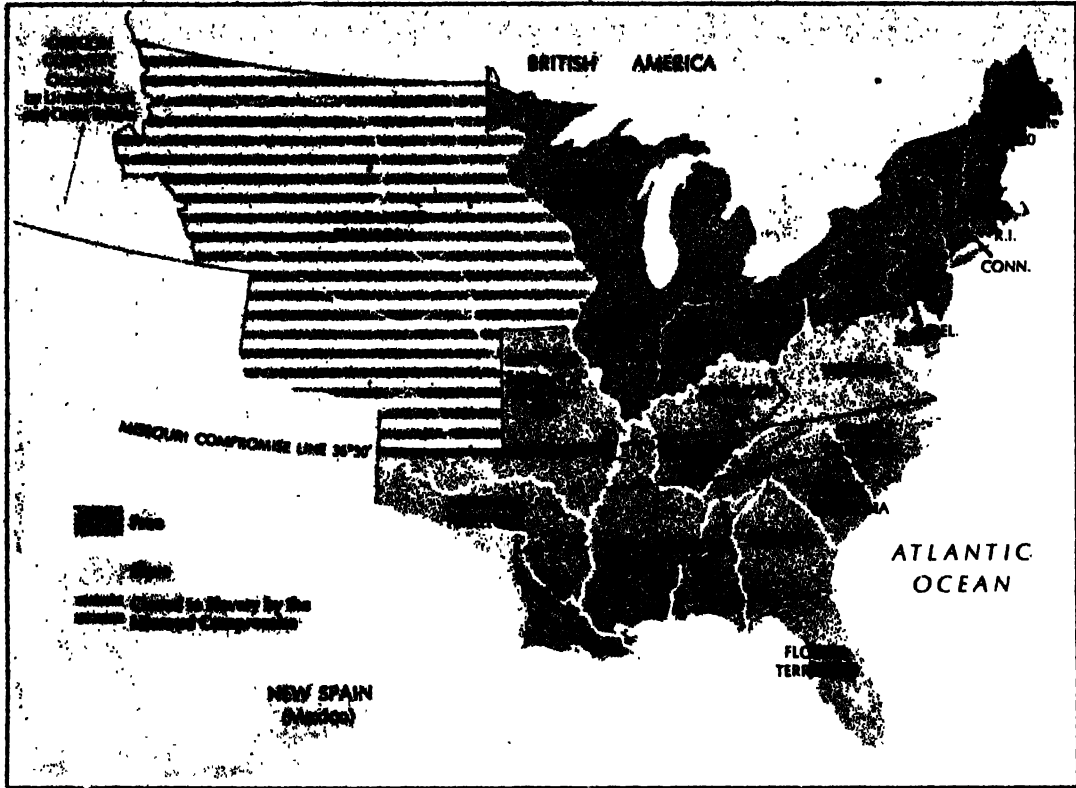
When Missouri applied for admission as a state, slavery already was well established there. The French and Spanish inhabitants of the Louisiana Territory (including what became Missouri) had owned slaves, and in the Louisiana Purchase treaty of 1803 the American government promised to maintain and protect the inhabitants in the free enjoyment of their property as well as their liberty and religion. By 1819 approximately 60,000 people resided in Missouri Territory, of whom about 10,000 were slaves. In that year, while Missouri's application for statehood was being considered in Congress, Representative James Tallmadge, Jr., of New York, moved to amend the enabling bill so as to prohibit the further introduction of slaves into Missouri and to provide for the gradual emancipation of those already there. This Tallmadge amendment provoked a controversy that was to rage for the next two years.

Though the issue arose suddenly, waking and terrifying Thomas Jefferson like "a fire bell in the night," as he said, sectional jealousies that produced it had been accumulating for a long time. Already the concept of a balance of power between the Northern and Southern states was well developed. From the beginning, partly by chance and partly by design, new states had come into the Union more or less in pairs, one from the North, another from the South. With the admission of Alabama in 1819, the Union contained an equal number of free and slave states, eleven of each. Thus the free and slave states were evenly balanced in

the Senate, though the free states with their more rapidly growing population had a majority in the House. If Missouri should be admitted as a slave state, not only would the existing sectional balance be upset but also a precedent would be established which, in the future, would still further increase the political power of the South.

In the North the most active antislavery people were well-to-do philanthropists and reformers who generally supported the Federalist party. They opposed the extension of slavery on both humanitarian and political grounds. On the eve of the dispute over Missouri the Manumission Society of New York was busy with attempts to rescue runaway slaves, and the Quakers were conducting a campaign to strengthen the laws against the African slave trade and to protect free Negroes from kidnappers who sold them into slavery. In the South there were still a large number of critics of slavery and its abuses, but here the humanitarian impulse was not reinforced by political interest as it was in the North. Northerners, in particular the Federalists, never tired in their denunciations of the Virginia Dynasty and the three-fifths clause which, they charged, gave the Southern states a disproportionate weight in national politics.

Once the Missouri controversy had arisen, it provided the opportunity, which Federalist leaders such as Rufus King had awaited, to attempt a revival and reinvigoration of their party. By appealing to the Northern people on the issue of slavery extension, the Federalists could hope to win many of the Northern Republicans away from their allegiance to the Republican party's Southern leadership. In New York the De Witt Clinton faction of the Republicans, who had joined with the Federalists in opposition to the War of 1812 and who were outspoken in their hostility to "Virginia influence" and "Southern rule," were more than willing to cooperate with the Federalists again. The cry against slavery in Missouri, Thomas Jefferson wrote, was "a mere party trick." He explained: "King is ready to risk the union for any chance of restoring his party to power and wriggling himself to the head of it,



**The Missouri Compromise 1820-1821**

nor is Clinton without his hopes nor scrupulous as to the means of fulfilling them." Though Jefferson himself took a biased, partisan view of the subject, there seems little reason to doubt that some of the Federalists desired to use the Missouri controversy for creating a new, sectional alignment of parties, the North against the South.

The Missouri question soon was complicated by the application of Maine for admission as a state. Massachusetts had consented to the separation of the northern part of the commonwealth but only on the condition that Maine be granted statehood before March 4, 1820. The Speaker of the House, Henry Clay, informed Northerners that if they refused to consent to Missouri's becoming a slave state Southerners would deny the application of Maine. In the House the Northern majority nevertheless insisted on the principle of the Tallmadge amendment, but in the Senate a few of the Northern-

ers sided with the Southerners and prevented its passage.

A way out of the impasse opened when the Senate combined the Maine and Missouri bills, without prohibiting slavery in Missouri. Then, to make the package more acceptable to the House, Senator Jesse B. Thomas of Illinois proposed an amendment prohibiting slavery in all the rest of the Louisiana Purchase territory north of the southern boundary of Missouri (latitude  $36^{\circ} 30'$ ). The Senate adopted the Thomas amendment, and Speaker Clay undertook to guide the amended Maine-Missouri bill through the House. Eventually, after the measure had been broken up into three separate bills, he succeeded. A group of Northern Republicans, some of them suspecting the political designs of the Federalists, voted with the Southerners to make the compromise possible.

The first Missouri Compromise (1820) did not end the dispute; a second compromise was

necessary. In 1820 Maine was actually admitted as a state, but Missouri was only authorized to form a constitution and a government. When the Missouri constitution was completed, it contained a clause forbidding free Negroes or mulattoes to enter the state. Several of the existing states, denying the right of citizenship to "free persons of color," already had laws against their immigration. Other states, among them New York, recognized colored persons as citizens. According to the federal Constitution, "The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." This meant that a citizen of such a state as New York, whether he was white or black, was entitled to all the privileges of a citizen of Missouri, including of course the privilege of traveling or residing in the state. The anti-Negro clause was clearly unconstitutional, and a majority in the House of Representatives threatened to exclude Missouri until it was eliminated. Finally Clay offered a resolution that Missouri should be admitted to the Union on the condition that the clause should never be construed in such a way as to deny to any citizen of any state the privileges and immunities to which he was entitled under the Constitution of the United States. In the circumstances, this resolution was meaningless, yet Clay secured its passage and enhanced his reputation as the "Great Pacificator," a reputation he was again and again to confirm during his long career. Clay's resolution made possible the admission of Missouri as a state in 1821.

Though the Missouri controversy did not unite the North, as some of the Federalists hoped it would, it made at least a beginning toward the creation of a solid South. At that time the most disaffected of the Southern states was Virginia and not, as later on, South Carolina. The Carolinian Calhoun hailed the compromise as a means of preserving the Union. The Virginian Jefferson looked to the fateful day when the South might have to defend itself in a civil war.

In this perspective the subject of education, always one of Jefferson's chief concerns, became even more crucial. He was afraid that Southern youths attending Northern colleges might be indoctrinated with "lessons of anti-Missourianism." Already the University of Virginia, the favorite project of his old age, was under construction. He hoped that this univer-

sity, devoting itself to sound Southern doctrines, would attract from Virginia and other Southern states a large number of students who otherwise would have pursued their studies in the North. For him, education once had been a means of liberating the human mind; now it became also a means of enabling slaveholders to protect their interests. Henceforth, in the South, the liberal and equalitarian philosophy that we think of as Jeffersonian declined in popularity and respect. Jefferson himself, in response to the Missouri controversy, had done much toward launching the new conservative trend.

### MARSHALL AND THE COURT

John Marshall remained as chief justice for almost thirty-five years, from 1801 to 1835. During these years Republican Presidents filled vacancies with Republican justices, one after another, and yet Marshall continued to carry a majority with him in most of the Court's decisions. He was a man of practical and penetrating mind, of persuasive and winning personality, and of strong will. The members of the Court boarded together, without their families, during the winter months when the Court was in session, and Marshall had abundant opportunity to bring his talents to bear upon his younger associates. He not only influenced their ways of thinking; he also molded the development of the Constitution itself. The net effect of the hundreds of opinions delivered by the Marshall Court was to strengthen the judicial branch at the expense of the other two branches of the government; increase the power of the United States and lessen that of the states themselves; and advance the interests of the propertied classes, especially those engaged in commerce.

No state, the Constitution says, shall pass any law "impairing the obligation of contracts." The first Supreme Court case involving this provision was that of *Fletcher v. Peck* (1810), which arose out of the notorious Yazoo Land frauds. The Court had to decide the question whether the Georgia legislature of 1796 could rightfully repeal the act of the previous legislature granting lands under shady circumstances to the Yazoo Land Companies. In the decision, which was unanimous, Marshall held that a

land grant was a contract and therefore, regardless of any corruption involved, the repeal was invalid. This was the first time the Supreme Court had voided a state law on the ground that it conflicted with a provision of the United States Constitution, though the Court previously had declared state laws unconstitutional because they were inconsistent with federal laws or treaties.

*Dartmouth College v. Woodward* (1819) was an even more famous case concerning the contract clause. The case had originated in a quarrel between the trustees and the president of the college, and it became a hot political issue in New Hampshire when the Republicans championed the president, and the Federalists took the side of the trustees. Getting control of the state government, the Republicans undertook to revise Dartmouth's charter 'granted by King George III in 1769) so as to convert the private college into a state university. Daniel Webster, a Dartmouth graduate, represented the trustees when the case came before the Supreme Court in Washington. The Court, he reminded the judges, had decided in *Fletcher v. Peck* that "a grant is a contract." The Dartmouth charter, he went on, "is embraced within the very terms of that decision," since "a grant of corporate powers and privileges is as much a contract as a grant of land." Then, according to a later story, he brought tears to the eyes of the justices with an irrelevant peroration concluding: "It is, sir, as I have said, a small college. And yet there are those who love it—" After delaying a year, while some of the justices made up their minds, the Court gave its decision in favor of Webster and the trustees. While the importance of the case often has been exaggerated, it had a significant bearing upon the development of business corporations. It proclaimed the principle that corporation charters were contracts and contracts were inviolable; thereafter the states had to contend against this doctrine in their efforts to control corporate activity.

Did the Supreme Court rightfully have the power to hear appeals from the state courts, as in the Dartmouth College case? The Judiciary Act of 1789 provided that whenever the highest state court decided against a person claiming rights under the federal Constitution, laws, or treaties, the judgment could be reviewed and possibly reversed by the Supreme Court. But

Virginia state-rightists denied the constitutionality of the Judiciary Act. They insisted that the federal government, of which the Supreme Court was a branch, could not be the final judge of its own powers, for, they said, it would then be a consolidated government instead of a true federal one such as the Constitution had intended. In the case of *Cohens v. Virginia* (1821) Marshall gave the Court's reply to the dissident Virginians. A Virginia court had convicted the Cohens of selling lottery tickets in violation of a state law, and the Cohens had appealed their case under the disputed provision of the Judiciary Act. Though Marshall decided against the Cohens, he did not satisfy the state of Virginia. He affirmed the constitutionality of the Judiciary Act, explaining that the states no longer were sovereign in all respects, since they had given up part of their sovereignty in ratifying the Constitution. The state courts, he insisted, must submit to federal jurisdiction, otherwise the government would be prostrated "at the feet of every state in the Union."

Meanwhile, in *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), Marshall had confirmed the "implied powers" of Congress by upholding the constitutionality of the Bank of the United States. The Bank, with headquarters in Philadelphia and branches in various cities throughout the country, became so unpopular in the South and the West that several of the states tried to drive the branches out of business by outright prohibition or by prohibitory taxes. Maryland, for one, laid a heavy tax on the Baltimore branch of the Bank. This case presented two constitutional questions to the Supreme Court: Could Congress charter a bank and, if so, could one of the states thus tax it? As one of the Bank's attorneys, Webster first repeated the arguments used originally by Hamilton to prove that the establishment of such an institution came within the "necessary and proper" clause. Then, to dispose of the tax issue, Webster added an ingenious argument of his own. The power to tax, he said, involved a "power to destroy," and if the states could tax the Bank at all, they could tax it to death. But the Bank with its branches was an agency of the federal government: no state could take an action tending to destroy the United States itself. Marshall adopted Webster's words in deciding for the Bank.

The case of *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) brought up the question of the powers of Con-

**McCulloch  
v. Maryland  
[1819]**

Chief Justice Marshall used the following argument in his decision that a state, such as Maryland, could not constitutionally tax a branch of the United States Bank:

*That the power to tax involves the power to destroy; that the power to destroy may defeat and render useless the power to create; that there is a plain repugnance in conferring on one government a power to control the constitutional measures of another, which other, with respect to those very measures, is declared to be supreme over that which exerts the control, are propositions not to be denied. . .*

*If the States may tax one instrument, employed by the [federal] government in the execution of its powers, they may tax any and every other instrument. They may tax the mail; they may tax the mint; they may tax patent rights; they may tax the papers of the customhouse; they may tax judicial processes; they may tax all the means employed by the government, to an excess which would defeat all the ends of government. This was not intended by the American people. They did not design to make their government dependent on the States.*

gress, as against the powers of the states, in regulating interstate commerce. The state of New York had granted Robert Fulton's and Robert Livingston's steamboat company the exclusive right to carry passengers on the Hudson River to New York City. From this monopoly Aaron Ogden obtained the business of navigation across the river between New York and New Jersey. Thomas Gibbons, with a license granted under an act of Congress, went into competition with Ogden, who brought suit against him and was sustained by the New York courts. When Gibbons appealed to the Supreme Court, the justices faced the twofold question whether "commerce" included navigation and whether Congress alone or Congress and the states together could regulate interstate commerce. Marshall replied that "commerce" was a broad term embracing navigation as well as the buying and selling of goods. Though he did not exactly say that the states had no authority whatever regarding interstate commerce, he asserted that the power of Congress in regard thereto was "complete in itself" and might be "exercised to its utmost extent." He concluded that the state-granted monopoly was void.

Here was a grant that neither Marshall nor Webster, Gibbons' attorney, considered sacred. The decision, the last of Marshall's great pronouncements, was the first conspicuous one in which the Marshall Court appeared to be on

the popular side. Most people, then as always, hated monopolies and he had declared a monopoly unconstitutional! The lasting significance of *Gibbons v. Ogden* was that it freed internal transportation from restraints by the states, and thus prepared the way for the unfettered economic development of the nation. More immediately, it had the effect of helping to head off a movement that was under way for hamstringing the Supreme Court.

For some time Virginia Republicans like Thomas Jefferson, Spencer Roane, and John Taylor of Caroline (a Virginia county) had protested against the views of their fellow Virginian John Marshall. In *Construction Construed and Constitutions Vindicated* (1820) Taylor argued that Marshall and his colleagues were not merely interpreting but were actually changing the nature of the Constitution, which should properly be changed only by the amending process, requiring the approval of three-fourths of the states. In Congress some critics of the Court, mostly from the South and the West, proposed various means of curbing what they called judicial tyranny. A Kentucky senator suggested making the Senate, not the Court, the agency to decide the constitutionality of state laws and to settle interstate disputes. Other senators and congressmen introduced bills to increase the membership of the Court (from seven to ten) and to require more than a mere majority to declare a state law unconstitu-

tional. The Court reformers did not succeed, however, in passing any of their various panaceas, and after the *Gibbons v. Ogden* decision the hostility to the judicial branch of the government gradually died down, to be revived in later years.

## LATIN AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

To most people in the United States, South and Central America had been "dark continents" before the War of 1812. Suddenly they emerged into the light, and Americans looking southward beheld a gigantic spectacle: the Spanish empire struggling in its death throes, a whole continent in revolt, new nations in the making with a future no man could foresee.

Already a profitable trade had developed between the ports of the United States and those of the Río de la Plata in South America, of Chile, and above all of Cuba, with flour and other staples being exported in return for sugar and coins. This trade was small in comparison with that of Great Britain, whose exports to Latin America were several times as large as those of the United States, but the trade was growing steadily, and during the depression after 1819 it held up better than business in general did. Presumably the trade would increase much faster once the United States had established regular diplomatic and commercial relations with the countries in revolt.

In 1815 the United States proclaimed its neutrality in the wars then raging between Spain and her rebellious colonies. This neutrality in itself was advantageous to the rebels, since it implied a recognition of them as belligerents, as nations for the purposes of waging war, though not as nations for all purposes. It meant, for example, that their warships would be treated as bona-fide belligerent vessels, not as pirate ships. Moreover, even though the neutrality law was revised and strengthened in 1817 and 1818, it still permitted the revolutionists to obtain unarmed ships and supplies from the United States. It prohibited the purchase of arms or armed vessels and the enlistment of men in this country, but these prohibitions could be evaded and often were. In short, the United States was not a strict and impartial neutral but a nonbelligerent whose policy,

though cautious, was intended to help the insurgents and actually did.

Secretary Adams and President Monroe hesitated to take the risky step of recognition unless Great Britain would agree to do so at the same time. In 1818 and 1819 the United States made two bids for British cooperation, and both were rejected. Finally, in 1822, President Monroe informed Congress that five nations—La Plata (Argentina), Chile, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico—were ready for recognition, and he requested an appropriation for sending ministers to them. This was a bold stroke: the United States was going ahead alone as the first country to recognize the new governments, in defiance of the rest of the world.

## ORIGIN OF THE MONROE DOCTRINE

In 1823 President Monroe stood forth as an even bolder champion of America against Europe. Presenting to Congress his annual message on the state of the Union, he announced a policy which afterward—though not for thirty years—was to be known as the "Monroe Doctrine." One phase of this policy had to do with the relationship of Europe to America. "The American continents," Monroe declared, ". . . are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers." Furthermore, "we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." And we should consider any "interposition" against the sovereignty of existing American nations as an unfriendly act. A second aspect of the President's pronouncement had to do with the relationship of the United States to Europe. "Our policy in regard to Europe," said Monroe, ". . . is not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers."

How did the President happen to make these statements at the time he did? What specific dangers, if any, did he have in mind? Against what powers in particular was his warning directed? To answer these questions, it may be well to consider first the relations of the United States with the European powers as of 1823, and then the main steps in the decision of the Monroe administration to make an announcement to Congress and the world.

## Monroe Doctrine [1823]

*. . . The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. . . .*

*In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so. . . . We should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of the European powers we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.*

After Napoleon's defeat the powers of Europe combined in a "concert" to uphold the principle of "legitimacy" in government and to prevent the overthrow of existing regimes from within or without. When Great Britain withdrew from the concert, it became a quadruple alliance with Russia and France as the strongest of its four members. Tsar Alexander I of Russia also sponsored the "Holy Alliance," which eventually was joined by all the European sovereigns except the Pope and the King of England, and which was supposed to put into practice the Tsar's rather fuzzy ideal of peace and justice based upon Christian principles. Though the quadruple alliance and the Holy Alliance were separate, most Americans made no distinction between them, commonly referring to the European concert as the "Holy Alliance." In 1823, after assisting in the suppression of other revolts in Europe, the European allies authorized France to intervene in Spain to restore the Bourbon dynasty that revolutionists had overthrown. Some observers in England and the Americas wondered whether the allies next would back France in an attempt to retake by force the lost Spanish empire in America.

Actually, France was still a relatively weak power, not yet recovered from the long and exhausting Napoleonic wars. Though France disliked Latin American independence, she was willing to accept it as one of the realities of the world, especially if it should result in

the creation of monarchies instead of republics. France endeavored to bring about the establishment of pro-French kingdoms in Latin America by means of intrigue, but dared not challenge British sea power with an expedition to subvert the new governments by force.

Russia, the great land power of Europe, lacked naval strength. She desired the friendship of the United States because of her worldwide conflicts with Great Britain. When the Tsar expressed his wish that the United States become a member of the Holy Alliance, Secretary Adams politely let him know that this country could best serve the exalted purpose of the alliance by remaining apart from it. While American pacifists admired the Tsar as a friend of brotherhood and peace, Adams grew sarcastic about the supposedly peace-loving Tsar who sold warships to Spain to assist her war against her revolting colonies. Besides the vague threat Russia offered to Latin American independence, there were other causes of friction between her and the United States. Russia owned Alaska, and Russian fur traders ranged as far south as California. In 1821 the Tsar issued a ukase (imperial order) requiring foreign ships to keep approximately one hundred miles from the Northwest coast above the 51st parallel. This order perturbed Adams not only because it interfered with the activities of American traders and whalers in the North Pacific but also because it implied a Russian territorial claim that would enlarge the area of Russian

America. Adams protested strongly to the Russians. Instead of taking offense, they agreed to negotiate regarding the southern boundary of their possessions. The settlement was not completed until 1824, when the Russians abandoned their claim south of 54° 40'. But in 1823 the negotiations were already under way and, for the time being, Russian-American relations were reasonably good.

In the minds of most Americans, certainly in the mind of their secretary of state, Great Britain at that time seemed a serious threat to American interests. Adams was much concerned about supposed British designs upon Cuba. Like Jefferson and others before him, Adams opposed the transfer of Cuba from a weak power like Spain, its owner, to a strong power like Great Britain. He thought Cuba eventually should belong to the United States, for the "Pearl of the Antilles" had great economic and strategic value and, because of its location, was virtually a part of the American coastline. Adams did not desire to seize the island; he wanted only to keep it in Spanish hands until, by a kind of political gravitation, it should fall naturally to the United States. Despite his worries over the supposed British threat to Cuba, he and other American leaders were pleased to see the rift between Great Britain and the concert of Europe. He was willing to cooperate with her, but only to the extent that her policies and his own coincided in regard to this hemisphere.

These policies did not exactly coincide, however, as was shown by the British rejection of the American overtures for joint recognition of Latin American independence in 1818 and 1819, and as was shown again by the American reaction to a British proposal for a joint statement in 1823. That summer, the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, George Canning, suggested to the American minister in London, Richard Rush, that Great Britain and the United States should combine in announcing to the world their opposition to any European movement against Latin America. Though Rush lacked instructions to act, he was ready to go ahead with Canning on one condition—that Great Britain agree to recognize the Latin American nations as the United States already had done. When Canning declined to promise recognition, Rush wrote home for instructions. During the summer Canning remained eager

for Rush's cooperation, but in the fall, having been assured by the French minister that France had no intention of "acting against the colonies by force of arms," Canning suddenly lost interest in his idea of a joint statement with the United States.

Meanwhile the Monroe administration was considering the proposal that Canning had made earlier. Monroe sent the Rush correspondence to former Presidents Madison and Jefferson for their advice, and both of them recommended that Rush be authorized to sign a joint statement with Canning. Adams objected. For one thing, he did not like the statement that Canning had proposed: it included a pledge by Great Britain and the United States that neither of the two would seek further territory in this hemisphere, and Adams did not wish to stop this country from future territorial acquisitions. For another thing, he believed it would be more honorable for the American government to speak out on its own instead of following along like a "cockboat in the wake of the British man-of-war." Actually, when the time arrived for Monroe's message to Congress, the President no longer faced a question of acting with Great Britain or alone. He had the choice of acting alone or not at all, since Canning had changed his mind about cooperation with the United States.

Though Canning's overture led to Monroe's announcement, the message was directed against all the powers of Europe, including Great Britain, which seemed at least as likely as Russia to undertake further colonizing ventures in America. The message was intended to head off the threat of European schemes against Latin American independence, but the most serious threat was one of undermining that independence by subtle influences rather than overt military action. The message aimed to rally the people of Latin America to look to their own security. It also aimed to stir the people of the United States. In issuing his challenge to Europe, Monroe had in mind the domestic situation as well as the international scene. At home the people were bogged down in a business depression, divided by sectional politics, and apathetic toward the rather lackluster administration of Monroe. In the rumors of European aggression against this hemisphere lay a chance for him to arouse and unite the people with an appeal to national pride.



## The Two-Party System Revived

After 1816 the Federalist party offered no presidential candidate and soon ceased to exist as a national organization. Presidential politics was carried on within the Republican party alone until the campaign of 1828, when the Republicans divided into two groups and thus set going a party system comparable to the one that had operated before 1820.

### "CORRUPT BARGAIN!"

From 1796 to 1816, presidential candidates had been nominated by caucuses of the members of each of the two parties in Congress. In 1820, when the Federalists declined to oppose his candidacy, Monroe ran as the Republican nominee without the necessity of a caucus nomination. If the caucus system were revived and followed in 1824, this would mean that the nominee of the Republicans in Congress would run unopposed, as Monroe had done. Several men aspired to the presidency, however, and they and their followers were unwilling to let a small group of congressmen and senators determine which one was to win the prize.

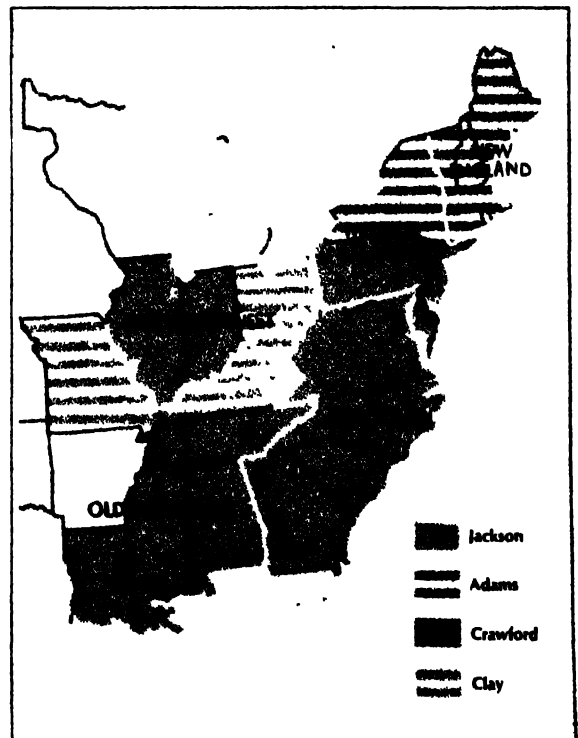
In 1824 "King Caucus" was overthrown. Fewer than a third of the Republicans in Congress bothered to attend the gathering that went through the motions of nominating a candidate (William H. Crawford) and he found the caucus nomination as much a handicap as a help in the campaign. The rest of the candidates received nominations from state legislatures and endorsements from irregular mass meetings throughout the country.

John Quincy Adams, secretary of state for two terms, had made a distinguished record in the conduct of foreign affairs, and he held the office that had become traditionally the stepping stone to the presidency. But, as he himself ruefully realized, he was a man of cold and forbidding manners, not a candidate with strong popular appeal. Contending against Adams was the Secretary of the Treasury, William H. Crawford of Georgia, an impressive giant of a man who seemed to have a promising future in national politics. The caucus candidate, Crawford had the backing of the extreme state-rights faction of the Republican party. In mid-

campaign, however, he was stricken by a paralyzing illness.

Challenging the cabinet contenders was Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House. This tall, black-haired Kentuckian, with his broad smile and his ready handshake, had a personality that gained him a devoted following. He also stood for a definite and coherent program, which he called the "American System." His plan, a familiar one but attractive to citizens just recovering from a business depression, was to create a great home market for factory and farm producers by means of raising the tariff to stimulate industry, maintaining the national bank to facilitate credit and exchange, and spending federal funds on internal improvements to provide transportation between the cities and the farms.

### Election of 1824



Andrew Jackson offered no such clear-cut program as did Clay. Though Jackson had served briefly as a representative in Congress and was a member of the United States Senate, he had no legislative record to run on. Nevertheless, he had the inestimable advantages of a military hero's reputation and a campaign shrewdly managed by the Tennessee politician friends who had put him forward as a candidate. To some of his contemporaries he seemed a crude, hot-tempered frontiersman and Indian fighter. Actually, though arising from a humble background as an orphan in the Carolinas, he had become a well-to-do planter who lived in an elegant mansion ("The Hermitage") near Nashville and was a gentleman, at least by the standards of the West.

Once the returns were counted, there was no doubt that the next Vice President was to be Calhoun, who ran on both the Adams and the Jackson tickets. But there was considerable doubt as to who the next President would be. In those states where the people chose the presidential electors, Jackson led all the rest at the polls. In the electoral college also he came out ahead, with 99 votes to Adams' 84, Crawford's 41, and Clay's 37. He lacked the necessary majority, however. So, in accordance with the Twelfth Amendment, the final decision was left to the House of Representatives, which was to choose among the three candidates with the highest electoral vote. Clay, for all his charm, was out of the running.

If Clay, in 1825, could not be President, he could at least be President maker, and perhaps he could lay the ground for his own election later on. As Speaker he was in a strategic position for influencing the decision of the House of Representatives. In deciding among the three leading candidates, the House was to vote by states, the delegation from each state casting one vote. Clay, as the winner of the recent election in Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri, could swing the congressional delegations of those three states at least.

Before Congress got around to making the decision, the friends of Jackson, Crawford, and Adams approached Clay in behalf of their respective candidates. To which of the three should he give his support? Jackson's followers insisted that Jackson, with his popular and electoral pluralities, was really the people's choice and that Congress had no rightful alternative but to ratify the people's will. But Jack-

son was Clay's most dangerous rival for the political affections of the West, and he could not be depended upon to champion Clay's legislative program. Crawford was out of the question, for he was now a paralytic, incapable of discharging the duties of the presidency. Only Adams was left. Personally, he was no friend of Clay and had clashed with him repeatedly when both were peace delegates at Ghent and afterward. Politically, however, Adams was similar to Clay in cherishing nationalistic principles such as those of the "American System." Finally Clay gave his support to Adams, and the House elected him.

The Jacksonians were angry enough at this, but they became far angrier when the new President made known his appointments. Clay was to be the secretary of state! The State Department being the well-established route to the presidency, Adams thus appeared to be naming Clay as his own successor. The two must have agreed to make each other President—Adams now, Clay next—or so the Jacksonians exclaimed, and they pretended to be horrified by this "corrupt bargain." Very likely there had been some sort of understanding, and though there was nothing improper in it, it proved to be politically unwise for both Adams and Clay.

Soon after Adams' inauguration as President, Jackson resigned from the Senate to accept a renomination for the presidency from the Tennessee legislature and to begin a three-year campaign for election in 1828. Politics now overshadowed everything else. Throughout his term in the White House, Adams and his policies were to be thoroughly frustrated by the political bitterness arising from the "corrupt bargain."

## THE SECOND PRESIDENT ADAMS

The career of John Quincy Adams divides naturally into three parts. In the first part, as befitted the son of John Adams, he made a brilliant record in diplomacy, serving as the American minister in one foreign capital after another and then as one of the most successful of all secretaries of state. In the second phase of his career as President (1825-1829), he endured four ineffectual years that amounted to a mere interlude between the periods of his greatness. In the third, as a congressman from Massachu-

setts, he served his constituents and the nation with high distinction, gaining fame as "Old Man Eloquent," the foremost congressional champion of free speech. His frustration in the White House shows that the presidency demands more than exceptional ability and high-mindedness, for John Quincy Adams possessed both. The presidency also requires political skill and political luck, and these he did not have.

In his inaugural address and in his first message to Congress he boldly stated a broad conception of the powers and duties of the federal government. He recommended "laws promoting the improvement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, the cultivation of the mechanic and of the elegant arts, the advancement of literature, and the progress of the sciences, ornamental and profound." He had no chance of getting an appropriation from Congress to improve the minds of his countrymen. The most he could get was a few million dollars for improving rivers and harbors and for extending the National Road westward from Wheeling. This amount was more than Congress had appropriated for internal improvements under all his predecessors together, but it was far less than he hoped for.

Even in the field of diplomacy, where Adams had more experience than any other President before or since, he failed in the major efforts of his administration. Yielding to Secretary of State Clay's wish for cooperation with the Latin American governments, Adams appointed two delegates to attend an international conference which the Venezuelan liberator, Simon Bolívar, had called to meet at Panama in 1826. Objections arose in Congress for two reasons. One was that Southerners hated to think of white Americans mingling in Panama with colored delegates from Haiti, the independence of which the United States refused to recognize. The other reason for obstruction was simply politics—the determination of Jacksonians to discredit the administration. They charged that Adams aimed to sacrifice American interests and involve the nation in an entangling alliance. While the Jacksonians filibustered, Congress delayed the Panama mission so long that it became futile. One of the American delegates died on the way to the conference, and the other arrived after it was over. The United States had accomplished nothing to offset British influence, which prevailed in Latin America.



**John Quincy Adams**

*When this photograph was taken, shortly before his death in 1848, Adams was more than eighty years old and was a congressman from Massachusetts. He had left the Presidency almost twenty years earlier. During his White House days, as always, he was a hard, conscientious worker. He rose at four in the morning and built a fire before the servants were up. Then he made a long entry in his diary for the previous day. He wrote so much that his right hand sometimes became paralyzed with writer's cramps, so he taught himself to use his left hand also. (Brown Brothers)*

Adams was worsted also in a contest with the state of Georgia. That state attempted to remove the remaining Creek and Cherokee Indians so as to gain additional soil for cotton planters. The Creeks, however, had a treaty with the United States (1791) that guaranteed them the possession of the land they occupied. A new treaty (1825) ceded the land to the state, but Adams refused to enforce this treaty, believing that it had been obtained by fraud. The Georgia governor defied the President of the United States and went ahead with plans for Indian removal. At last the Creeks agreed to

still another treaty (1827) in which they yielded their claims. Adams' stand had been honorable but unpopular. Southerners condemned him for encroaching upon state rights, and Westerners as well as Southerners disapproved of his interfering with efforts to get rid of the Indians.

Southerners again denounced the administration and its supporters on account of the tariff of 1828. This measure originated in the demands of Massachusetts and Rhode Island woolen manufacturers, who complained that the British were dumping woolens on the American market at prices with which the domestic mill owners could not compete. Petitioning Congress, the distressed mill owners expected relief from the Woolens Bill of 1827. It passed the House but was defeated in the Senate when Vice President Calhoun cast his negative vote to break a tie. Thus frustrated, the protectionists of New England combined with those of the middle and Western states to put more pressure on Congress, after gathering in a grand convention at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The bill of 1828 contained high duties not only on woolens but also on a number of other items, such as flax, hemp, iron, lead, molasses, and raw wool. Thus it displeased New England manufacturers, for it would raise the cost of their raw materials as well as the price of their manufactured goods. A story arose that the bill had taken its shape from a Jacksonian plot to embarrass New Englanders and discredit Adams. The bill related to "manufactures of no sort or kind but the manufacture of a President of the United States," John Randolph said. Supposedly it was intended to put Adams in a dilemma that would lose him friends whether he signed or vetoed it. While some politicians did see the measure as an electioneering device, others intended it seriously as a means of benefiting the farmers and manufacturers of the middle states and the West.

When the bill was considered item by item, Southerners voted against reductions in the hope that some of its outrageous duties would so antagonize New Englanders that they would help defeat it. But when it came to a final test, Daniel Webster voted for it despite its duties on raw materials, and he carried with him enough New England votes to enable it to pass. Adams signed it. The Southerners, whose tactics had backfired, cursed it as the "tariff of abominations."

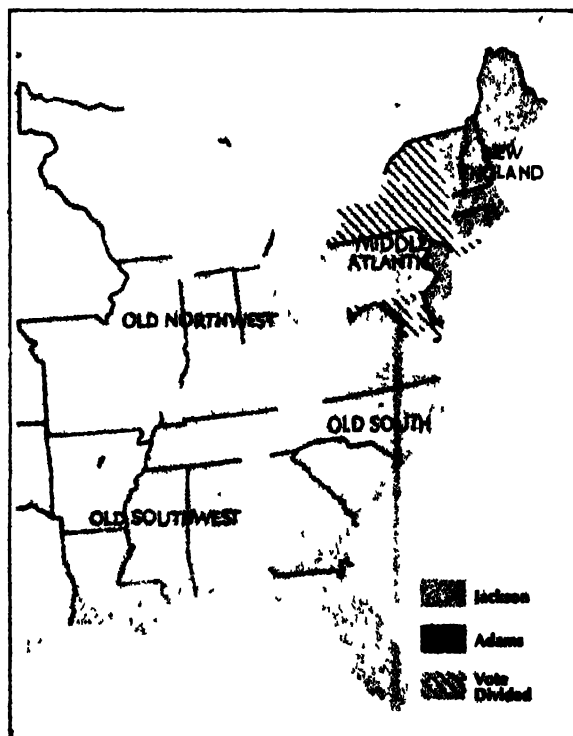
## JACKSON VINDICATED

By 1828, the Republican party having split completely, there were again two parties in the campaign—the Adamsites, who called themselves National Republicans, and the Jacksonians, who took the name of Democratic Republicans. Adams himself once had been a Federalist, and most of the old Federalists joined his party, though some became followers of Jackson.

Issues figured little in the campaign of 1828, though much was said about the "corrupt bargain" and something was said about the West Indian trade and the "tariff of abominations." Regarding the tariff, Adams was on record, having signed the abominations bill, but nobody knew exactly where Jackson stood. Again, as in 1824, more was made of personalities than of policies, and this time there was far worse mudslinging than ever before. Indeed, one would have thought that two criminals were running for the highest office in the land.

As for Adams, the Jacksonians charged

## Election of 1823



that as President he had been guilty of gross waste and extravagance, using public funds to buy gambling devices (a chess set and a billiard table) for the White House. But that was not the worst of Adams' alleged crimes. Once, as minister to Russia, he had tried to procure a beautiful American girl for the sinful pleasures of the Tsar, or so the Jacksonians said. Of course, these charges were wholly false. Indeed, they were fantastic things to say about a man as conscientious and puritanical as John Quincy Adams.

As for Jackson, the Adamsites had accusations even worse. He was a murderer and an adulterer, according to the speeches, handbills, and pamphlets of his party foes. A "coffin handbill" listed within coffin-shaped outlines the names of militiamen whom Jackson was said to have shot in cold blood during the War of 1812. Actually, these men had been deserters

who were executed after due sentence by a court martial. It was also rumored that Jackson knowingly had lived in sin with the wife of another man. Actually, he had married the woman, his beloved Rachel, at a time when the pair honestly though mistakenly supposed her first husband had divorced her.

Though the majority voted for Jackson, a large minority (44 percent) favored Adams, who received all but one of the electoral votes from New England, all from New Jersey and Delaware, and some from New York and Maryland. These totaled only 83, however, as compared with 178 for Jackson, who carried the rest of the country. His victory was decisive enough, even though not quite so sweeping as it seemed. In the eyes of his followers, he—and they—were vindicated in their claim that he had been wrongfully deprived of the presidency in 1825.

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# Jacksonian Democracy



## Ten



In 1831–1832 a twenty-six-year-old French nobleman, Alexis de Tocqueville, made a tour of the United States, talking with people of all kinds, from President Jackson in the White House to Negro slaves in the cotton fields of the South. Tocqueville's aim was to study the workings of democracy – or, more specifically, the idea of equality – in what he considered the most democratic country on earth. He believed that democracy was the way of the future, that it was bound to come sooner or later to France. He wanted to find its good and bad and its essential and unessential features so that his own country could be prepared to adopt the best and avoid the worst. His two-volume study of *Democracy in America* (1835–1840) still stands as the most perspicacious general account of American institutions ever to be written by a foreigner.

"The government of democracy," Tocqueville wrote, "brings the notion of political rights to the level of the humblest citizens, just as the dissemination of wealth brings the notion of property within the reach of all the members of the community; and I confess that, to my mind, this is one of its greatest advantages." But he feared that, with the continued growth of factories, there might eventually arise in the United States a large group of dependent workingmen and a small group of new aristocrats, an industrial plutocracy. For "at the very moment at which the science of manufactures lowers the class of workmen, it raises the class of masters."

With this prospect of widening class differences, some Americans wondered about the wisdom of extending political rights to larger and larger numbers. President Jackson and his followers, however, generally endorsed and aided the extensions of democratic thought and practice that preceded, accompanied, and followed his rise to power. Viewing himself as the real

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### **Jackson Poster**

Running for reelection in 1832, Andrew Jackson was hailed as a great democrat because of his opposition to the monopolistic Bank of the United States and as a great patriot because of his resistance to the doctrine of nullification and secession. This campaign handbill stresses both the democratic and the patriotic theme. (Tennessee State Library and Archives, Manuscripts Section, Andrew Jackson Papers)

representative of the people, Jackson dominated American politics for a time. Like a powerful magnet, he attracted a majority of the voters to him, and he polarized the others into a pattern of opposition—anti-Jacksonians against Jacksonians or, as they came to be known, Whigs against Democrats. He took a decisive part in the major controversies that arose. These concerned not only the role of the common man in government but also the rights of the states and the rights of the Indians, the nullification threat from South Carolina, and the alleged danger to

democracy arising from a great financial monopoly, the Bank of the United States.

The Jacksonians made strenuous efforts to arouse and organize the citizens and bring them out to vote. Then, stealing the Jacksonians' thunder, the Whigs came into office in 1840 by stirring up the electorate as not even Jackson had been able to do. This, rather than 1828, was the year of a "mighty democratic uprising." Politicians now developed new techniques of mass manipulation, and politics took on a modern look.

## Advent of Mass Politics

On March 4, 1829, unprecedented thousands of Americans attended the inaugural ceremonies at the Capitol, and then the noisy crowd followed their hero to the White House, where at a public reception they trampled one another and even the elegantly upholstered sofas and chairs in their eagerness to shake his hand. "It was a proud day for the people," one of the Jacksonians, Amos Kendall, reported to his newspaper in Kentucky. "General Jackson is *their own* president." But most old Federalists and all lovers of political decorum were horrified. John Marshall's friend and colleague Justice Joseph Story disgustedly remarked: "The reign of King 'Mob' seemed triumphant."

### THE COMMON MAN'S PRESIDENT

Though the new President was no democratic philosopher like Jefferson, he nevertheless held certain democratic convictions, notably the conviction that government should offer "equal protection and equal benefits" to all the people. His enemies denied that he ever really championed the people's cause, but they could not deny that he became a living symbol of democracy or that, far more than any of his predecessors, he gave a sense of participation in government to the common man.

As President, Jackson promptly set about to "reform" the personnel procedures of the federal government. For a generation, ever

since the downfall of the Federalists in 1800, there had been no complete party turnover in Washington. Officeholders accordingly stayed on year after year and election after election, many of them growing gray and some of them growing corrupt in office. "Office is considered as a species of property," Jackson told Congress, "and government rather as a means of promoting individual interests than as an instrument created solely for the service of the people." He believed that official duties could be made "so plain and simple that men of intelligence may readily qualify themselves for their performance." According to him, offices belonged to the people, not to the entrenched officeholders. Or, as one of his henchmen, William L. Marcy of New York, more cynically put it, "To the victors belong the spoils."

A corollary to the spoils system was the doctrine of rotation in office. Since ordinary men ("of intelligence") presumably were fit or could easily be fitted for government service, and since loyal members of the victorious party deserved government jobs, a particular position should not be held too long by any one person but should be passed around, or rotated, among several deserving applicants.

In actual practice, Jackson did not make such drastic removals as his partisan critics then and afterward asserted. During the entire eight years of his presidency he removed a total of no more than one-fifth of the federal officeholders, and many of these he removed for



## Jackson's Inaugural Reception [1829]

Andrew Jackson's inauguration impressed a Washington society woman, Mrs. Samuel H. Smith, as a solemn and sublime event. Afterward Mrs. Smith went with a party of friends to the inaugural reception at the White House. "But what a scene did we witness!" she wrote a few days later, in a letter to an out-of-town relative.

*The Majesty of the People had disappeared, & a rabble, a mob, of boys, negros, women, children, scrambling, fighting, romping. What a pity, what a pity! No arrangements had been made, no police officers placed on duty & the whole house had been inundated by the rabble mob. We came too late. The President, after having been literally nearly pressed to death & almost suffocated & torn to pieces by the people in their eagerness to shake hands with Old Hickory, had retreated through the back way or south front & had escaped to his lodgings at Gadsby's. Cut glass & china to the amount of several thousand dollars had been broken in the struggle to get the refreshments, punch & other articles had been carried out in tubs & buckets, but had it been in hogsheds it would have been insufficient, ice-cream, & cake & lemonade, for 20,000 people, for it is said that number were there, tho' I think the estimate exaggerated. Ladies fainted, men were seen with bloody noses & such a scene of confusion took place as is impossible to describe,—those who got in could not get out by the door again, but had to scramble out of windows.*

cause, such as misuse of government funds. Proportionally, Jackson dismissed no more of the jobholders than Jefferson had done. Nor did he appoint illiterate coon-hunters or the like to positions requiring special training or skill. The fact remains, nevertheless, that the Jackson administration, adapting the spoils system from some of the states, fixed it firmly upon national politics.

Eventually the Jacksonians adopted another instrument of democratic politics—the national nominating convention—which was originated by the earliest of the third parties in American history, the Anti-Masonic party. This party was a response to widespread resentment against the secret and exclusive, hence supposedly undemocratic, Society of Freemasons. Feeling rose to new heights when, in 1826, a man named William Morgan mysteriously disappeared from his home in Batavia, New York. Since Morgan had been about to publish a book purporting to expose the secrets of freemasonry, his friends believed that vengeful Masons had done away with him. The excitement spread, and politicians in New York, Pennsylvania, and several other states seized upon it to organize a party with popular

appeal. The party was anti-Jackson as well as Anti-Mason, Jackson being a high-ranking member of the lodge. In 1831 the Anti-Masons held a national convention in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to nominate a candidate for the next year's presidential campaign.

## MORE AND MORE VOTERS

When Ohio and other new states in the West joined the Union, they adopted constitutions that gave the vote to all adult white males and allowed all voters the right to hold public office. Thus the new states set an example for the older ones. These older states became concerned about the loss of their population to the West, and they began slowly and haltingly to grant additional political rights to their people so as to encourage them to stay at home. Even before the War of 1812 a few of the Eastern states permitted white men to vote whether or not they owned property or paid a tax. After 1815 the states began to revise their constitutions by calling conventions that served as grand committees of the people to draw up new documents and submit them for public approval.

## An Argument Against Universal Suffrage [1821]

According to the original constitution of New York, the state senate was elected by owners of land worth at least \$250 and the assembly by owners of land worth at least \$50. At the constitutional convention of 1821 the radicals proposed to abolish all property qualifications for voting. A conservative delegate, James Kent, objected. Then chancellor of the state chancery court, Kent was one of the nation's foremost legal authorities. Later he wrote a classic four volume work entitled *Commentaries on American Law* (1826-1830). In 1821 he was willing to abolish the property qualification for assembly elections, but he wished to "preserve our Senate as the representative of the landed interest." He told his fellow delegates

*By the report before us, we propose to annihilate, at one stroke, all those property distinctions and to bow before the idol of universal suffrage. That extreme democratic principle, when applied to the legislative and executive departments of the government, has been regarded with terror by the wise men of every age, because in every European republic, ancient and modern, in which it has been tried, it has terminated disastrously, and been productive of corruption, injustice, violence, and tyranny.*

*The apprehended danger from the experiment of universal suffrage applied to the whole legislative department, is no dream of the imagination. It is too mighty an excitement for the moral constitution of men to endure. The tendency of universal suffrage is to jeopardize the rights of property and the principles of liberty. There is a constant tendency . . . in the poor to covet a share in the plunder of the rich, in the debtor to relax or avoid the obligation of contracts, in the majority to tyrannize over the minority, and trample down their rights, in the indolent and profligate to cast the whole burthens of society upon the industrious and the virtuous, and there is a tendency in ambitious and wicked men to inflame these combustible materials.*

Eventually all the states (some of them not till after the Civil War) changed their constitutions in the direction of increased democracy.

Change was resisted, and at times the democratic trend was stopped short of the aims of the more radical reformers, as, for example, when Massachusetts held its convention in 1820. The reform-minded delegates complained that in the Massachusetts government the rich were better represented than the poor, both because of the restrictions on voting and officeholding and because of the peculiar system of property representation in the state senate. The number of senators from each district of the state depended not upon the number of people in the district but upon the amount of its taxable wealth. The reformers urged an amendment apportioning senators according to population alone. Daniel Webster, one of the conservative delegates, opposed the

change on the grounds that "power naturally and necessarily follows property" and that "property as such should have its weight and influence in political arrangement." Webster and the rest of the conservatives could not prevent the reform of senate representation, nor could they prevent elimination of the property requirement for voting. But, to the disgust of the radicals, the new constitution required that every voter be a taxpayer and that the governor be the owner of considerable real estate.

In the New York convention of 1821 the conservatives, led by Chancellor James Kent, insisted that a taxpaying requirement for suffrage was not enough and that, at least in the election of state senators, the property qualification should be retained. Kent argued that society "is an association for the protection of property as well as of life" and that "the indi-

vidual who contributes only one cent to the common stock ought not to have the same power and influence in directing the property concerns of the partnership as he who contributes his thousands." The reformers, appealing to the Declaration of Independence, maintained that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, not property, were the main concerns of society and government. The property qualification was abolished in New York.

Other states proceeded more slowly in the broadening of democracy, none of them going to radical extremes. Progress was peaceful, except in Rhode Island. There the constitution was the old colonial charter, little changed, and it disqualified as voters more than half of the adult males of the state. Thomas L. Dorr and his suffragist followers, despairing of reform by legal processes, held a convention of their own, drew up a new constitution, and tried to set up an administration with Dorr as governor. When the existing state government began to imprison his followers he led a band of his men in an attack upon the Providence arsenal (1842). The Dorr Rebellion was quickly put down, yet it hastened the reforms that came afterward in Rhode Island.

In the South reformers criticized the overrepresentation of the tidewater areas and the underrepresentation of the back country in the legislatures. When the Virginia constitutional convention met, in 1829, the delegates from the western counties gained some slight concessions but not enough to satisfy them. Elsewhere in the Southeast the planters and politicians of the older counties continued to dominate the state governments.

With few exceptions, free Negroes could not vote anywhere in the South, nor could they vote in most of the Northern states. Pennsylvania at one time allowed Negro suffrage but eventually (1838) amended the constitution so as to prohibit it. In North and South, women continued to be denied the vote, regardless of the amount of property they might own. Everywhere the ballot was open, not secret, and often it was cast as a spoken vote rather than a written one. The lack of secrecy meant that voters could be, and sometimes were, bribed or intimidated.

In most of the states there was at first no popular vote for President. As late as 1800, the legislature chose presidential electors in ten of

the states, and the people in only six. The trend was toward popular election, however, and after 1828 the legislature made the choice in only one state, South Carolina. There the people had no chance to vote in presidential elections till after the Civil War.

Despite the persisting limitations, the number of voters increased far more rapidly than did the population as a whole. In the presidential election of 1824 fewer than twenty-seven in one hundred of adult white males voted (though previously, in some of the states, more than fifty had done so). In the election of 1828 the proportion rose to about fifty-five in one hundred—more than twice the figure for 1824—and in the elections of 1832 and 1836 the proportion remained approximately the same as in 1828. Then, in 1840, people flocked to the polls as never before, seventy-eight in one hundred white men casting their ballots. The multiplication of voters was due only in part to the widening of the electorate. It was due in greater measure to a heightening of interest in politics and a strengthening of party organization. Citizens now were aroused and brought out to vote who in former times had seldom bothered with elections.

Not only did the number of voters increase; so did the number of elective offices in the states. The first state constitutions had provided for the appointment of high state officials by the governor or by the legislature. The newer constitutions put the election of these officials, including judges in some cases, into the hands of the people. Supposedly the people thus were to have increased control over government. Actually, with authority so divided and diffused, it was harder than ever for the people to locate and hold to account the officials responsible for particular policies.

Political parties became more important as both the electorate and the elections grew in number and complexity. Parties were necessary for bringing together voters of diverse interests and providing common goals so that the will of the people could express itself in a united and meaningful way. Parties were also necessary to give central direction to governments made up of independently elected officials. Hence, as the states became more democratic, political organizations within them became more tightly knit. Political machines and party bosses appeared in states like New

York and Pennsylvania which had large and heterogeneous electorates with a variety of conflicting interests. In New York and Pennsylvania the spoils system was introduced before it was transplanted to the federal govern-

ment. State jobs were awarded to loyal workers of the victorious party, and job-seeking came to be the motive that held together and infused spirit into the core of the party membership.

## "Our Federal Union"

President Jackson had taken office with no clearly announced program to carry out. His followers—who soon began to call themselves simply Democrats—had interests so diverse that a statement of definite aims would have alienated many of the party at the outset. This is not to say that Jackson himself was wishy-washy or lacking in convictions. Far from it. Besides believing in government by and for the common man, he stood for strong presidential leadership and, while respecting what he considered the legitimate rights of the states, he was devoted to the national Union. He did not hesitate to assert his principles when South Carolina tried to put into effect the nullification (or interposition) theory of John C. Calhoun.

### CALHOUN: HIS THEORY

At the age of forty-six (in 1828) Calhoun had a promising future as well as a distinguished past. A congressional leader during the War of 1812, afterward head of the War Department for eight years (making a record that entitles him to rank as one of the few truly great secretaries of war), then Vice President in John Quincy Adams' administration, he now was running as the vice-presidential candidate on the Jackson ticket. And he could look forward to the presidency itself after a term or two for Jackson—if all went well.

But the tariff question placed Calhoun in a dilemma. Once he had been a forthright protectionist, coming out strongly for the tariff of 1816, but since that time many South Carolinians had changed their minds on the subject, and so had he. Carolina cotton planters were disturbed because their plantations did not pay, or at least were less profitable than it seemed they should have been. The whole state appeared to be stagnating, its population

remaining almost stationary, its countryside showing signs of ruin and decay. One reason was the exhaustion of the South Carolina soil, which could not well compete with the newly opened, fertile lands of the Southwest. But the Carolinians blamed their trouble on quite another cause—the tariff, in particular the "tariff of abominations," the law of 1828. They reasoned that protective duties raised the prices of the things they had to buy, whether they bought them at home or from abroad, and lowered the price of the cotton they sold, most of which was exported. They had a point: in order to export, a nation has to import, and to the extent that the tariff kept foreign goods out of the United States it also reduced the foreign market for American cotton. Some exasperated Carolinians were ready to seek escape from the hated law through revolution—that is, through secession. Here was a challenge Calhoun had to meet in order to maintain his leadership in the state and make a future for himself in national politics.

Quietly he worked out a theory to justify state action in resisting the tariff law. He intended for this action, if and when it became necessary, to be strictly legal and constitutional, not revolutionary. So he had to find a basis for his plan in the Constitution itself. In his earlier career, as a nationalist, he had said the Constitution was not a thing for logicians to exercise their ingenuity upon, but should be construed with plain good sense. Now he himself resorted to subtle and ingenious logic, discovering implications in the Constitution that were not obvious to everybody—not even to the "father of the Constitution," James Madison, who denounced the Calhoun theory when he heard of it. Calhoun believed, however, that he was following the lines laid down by Madison and Jefferson in their Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798-1799. Indeed, his

## WHERE HISTORIANS DISAGREE

# Jacksonian Democracy

Many of the early biographers of Andrew Jackson and historians of the Jackson period were upper middle-class Easterners who sympathized with his opponents, the Whigs. These unfriendly, Whiggish authors described him as a "barbarian" whose election was a "mistake" and whose policies on the whole were "deplorable." Such views prevailed until the end of the nineteenth century.

Then a new generation of scholars, nearly all of them from the West or the South, began to rewrite history in a manner highly favorable to Jackson. They saw him as a true democrat who, much like the progressives of their own time, strove to make government responsive to the will of the people rather than the desires of the special interests. The most influential of the newer historians, Frederick Jackson Turner, in his famous essay "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) and in later writings, maintained that Jacksonian Democracy had originated in the "frontier democratic society" of the West. Turner's "frontier interpretation" soon became predominant, though one authority on early Tennessee politics (Thomas P. Abernethy) insisted that Jackson actually had been a frontier aristocrat and had opposed the democratic trend in his own state.

In recent years historians have emphasized social classes rather than geographical sections in seeking to explain Jackson and his program, but they have disagreed about which class he represented. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., contended in *The Age of Jackson* (1945) that Jacksonian Democracy was an effort "to control the power of the capitalistic groups, mainly Eastern, for the benefit of noncapitalist groups, farmers and laboring men, East, West, and South." Critics of Schlesinger, however, argued that Jackson was antilabor rather than pro-labor and that he really reflected the interests of the rising businessmen. In *Banks and Politics in America from the Revolution to the Civil War* (1957) Bray Hammond described the Jacksonian cause as "one of enterpriser against capitalist, of banker against regulation, and of Wall Street against Chestnut" - that is, of New York City bankers against the Philadelphia-based Bank of the United States.

Disagreeing with both Hammond and Schlesinger and also with earlier historians such as Turner, Lee Benson maintained that the very term "Jacksonian Democracy" had "obscured rather than illuminated" our understanding of the period. In *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy. New York as a Test Case* (1961) Benson showed that, at least in the state of New York, both the Jackson and the anti-Jackson parties included the same kinds of big as well as small businessmen in addition to farmers and city workers and that politicians on both sides made use of similar "agrarian" rhetoric. According to Benson, the democratic movement was much broader than the Democratic party. Therefore, he suggested, we could take a step toward clarification by "discarding the old caption for the period" and substituting "the Age of Egalitarianism" for "the Age of Jackson."

reasoning was quite similar to theirs, but he carried it further than they had done, and he provided a definite procedure for state action, which they had not.

Calhoun started his reasoning with the assumption that sovereignty, the ultimate source of power, lay in the states considered as separate political communities. He went on to assume that these separate peoples had created the federal government, through their conventions that ratified the Constitution after it had been drawn up. Putting this in legal terminology, he described the states (meaning their peoples, not their governments) as the "principals," the federal government as their "agent," and the Constitution as a "compact" containing instructions within which the agent was to operate.

From these assumptions the rest of his theory followed logically enough. The Supreme Court was not competent to judge whether acts of Congress were constitutional, since the Court, like the Congress, was only a branch of an agency created by the states. No, Calhoun reasoned, the principals must decide, each for itself, whether their instructions were violated. If Congress enacted a law of doubtful constitutionality—say, a protective tariff—a state could "interpose" to frustrate the law. That is, the people of the state could hold a convention, and if (through their elected delegates) they decided that Congress had gone too far, they could declare the federal law null and void within their state. In that state the law would remain inoperative until three-fourths of the whole number of states should ratify an amendment to the Constitution specifically assigning Congress the power in question. And if the other states should ever get around to doing this, the nullifying state would then submit—or it could secede.

The legislature of South Carolina published Calhoun's first statement of his theory, anonymously, in a document entitled *The South Carolina Exposition and Protest* (1828). This condemned the recent tariff as unconstitutional, unfair, and unendurable—a law fit to be nullified. Calhoun had good reason for not wishing to be identified publicly as the author of the document. It was bound to arouse a certain amount of opposition in parts of the country, and of course he hoped to be reelected

Vice President and later to be elected President.

After the Jackson-Calhoun ticket had won its victory at the polls, Calhoun was no more eager than before to see nullification put into effect. He waited, hoping that Jackson as President would persuade Congress to make drastic reductions in tariff rates and thus mollify the outraged Carolina planters. It remained to be seen what chance Calhoun would have for the presidency as Jackson's friend and successor. As soon as the major appointments had been made, he gained an inkling of his importance, or unimportance, in the new administration. He then realized he had a powerful rival for Jackson's favor in the person of Martin Van Buren.

#### VAN BUREN TO THE FORE

Van Buren, about the same age as Calhoun and equally ambitious, was quite different in background and personality. Born of Dutch ancestry in the village of Kinderhook near Albany, New York, he advanced himself through skillful maneuvering to the position of United States senator (1820–1828). He also made himself the party boss of his state by organizing and leading the Albany Regency, the Democratic machine of New York. Though he supported Crawford for President in 1824, he afterward became one of the most ardent of Jacksonians, doing much to carry his state for Jackson in 1828 while getting himself elected as governor. By this time he had a reputation as a political wizard. Short and slight, with reddish gold sideburns and a quiet manner, he gained a variety of revealing nicknames, such as "the Sage of Kinderhook," "the Little Magician," and "the Red Fox." Never giving or taking offense, he was in temperament just the opposite of the choleric Jackson, yet the two were about to become the closest of friends. Van Buren promptly resigned the governorship and went to Washington when Jackson called him to head the new cabinet as secretary of state.

Except for Van Buren, this cabinet contained no one of more than ordinary talent. It was intended (as cabinets usually are) to represent and harmonize the sectional and factional interests within the party. No Virginian was

included: for the first time since 1789 Virginia provided neither the President nor any of the secretaries. Friends of both Van Buren and Calhoun were given places. This cabinet was not intended to form a council of advisers: Jackson did not even call cabinet meetings.

Instead, he relied on an unofficial circle of political cronies who came to be known as the "Kitchen Cabinet." Noteworthy in this group were several newspaper editors, among them Isaac Hill, a hunchbacked master of invective from New Hampshire, and Amos Kendall and Francis P. Blair from Kentucky. After 1830 Blair edited the administration's official organ, the *Washington Globe*. The close-mouthed, asthmatic, "invisible" Kendall was said to be the genius who, behind the scenes, really ran the administration. While doubtless influential, he was no more so than several others, especially Jackson's old Tennessee friend and political manager William B. Lewis, who roomed at the White House and had ready access to the President. Soon to be the most important of all was Van Buren, a member of both the official and the unofficial cabinet.

Vice President Calhoun, to his dismay, saw signs of Van Buren's growing influence when he viewed the division of the spoils. Not only did Van Buren get cabinet places for himself and his friends; he also secured the appointment of his followers to most of the lesser offices. Already, beneath the surface, there was the beginning of a rift between the Vice President and the President. Then Calhoun and Jackson were further estranged, and at the same time Jackson and Van Buren were brought closer together, in consequence of a curious quarrel over a woman and etiquette.

Peggy O'Neil, the bright-eyed, vivacious daughter of a Washington tavern-keeper, was the kind of woman whom men admire and women dislike. Jackson's Tennessee friend Senator John H. Eaton took the young widow as his wife, with Jackson's blessing. Washington gossips told and retold scandalous stories about her relationship with Eaton while her former husband had been still alive. All the talk would have amounted to little if Jackson had not appointed Eaton as his secretary of war and thus made Mrs. Eaton a cabinet wife. The rest of the administration wives, led by Mrs. Calhoun, snubbed Mrs. Eaton. Jackson was

furiously. His own wife, the dead Rachel, had been slandered by his political enemies, and he was confident that Peggy too was virtuous, an innocent victim of dirty politics. He not only defended her virtue: he demanded that his secretaries and associates concede it and treat her with respect. But they had their wives to contend with. Calhoun, for one, had no choice but to take sides against Mrs. Eaton, which meant taking sides against her champion, Jackson. With Van Buren the case was different. A widower, without daughters, he had no womenfolk to worry about. From the outset he befriended the Eatons and thus ingratiated himself with the President.

The Eaton affair dragged on, and finally Jackson decided to get rid of his uncooperative secretaries and reorganize his cabinet (1831). Van Buren resigned and so did two of his friends; the others took the hint and submitted their resignations too. Jackson appointed a new cabinet which on the whole was considerably stronger than the first one. Thereafter he relied more on his official advisers, less on the Kitchen Cabinet. As for Van Buren, he was sent to England as American minister, the appointment being made while the Senate was not in session. When the Senate met, there was a tie vote on the question of confirming the appointment, and Calhoun as the presiding officer broke the tie by casting his own ballot against Van Buren. This brought Van Buren home but gave no advantage to Calhoun.

Already Jackson had picked Van Buren for the presidential succession and had marked Calhoun as the worst of foes. The final break came when Jackson learned the inside story of a Monroe cabinet meeting years earlier. At the time of Jackson's Florida raid (1817) and for a long time afterward he supposed that Calhoun, as Monroe's secretary of war, had stood up for him when others in the administration proposed to punish him for his action. The truth, as Calhoun's enemies at last convinced Jackson, was quite otherwise.

## THE WEBSTER-HAYNE DEBATE

If there had been only personal differences between Jackson and Calhoun, their parting would have been less significant than it actually

was. But there were also differences of principle. At the height of the Eaton affair the opposing views of the two men were dramatically revealed in consequence of a great debate on the nature of the Constitution.

The Webster-Hayne debate, in January 1830, grew out of a Senate discussion of public lands, a discussion provoked when a senator from Connecticut suggested that all land sales and surveys be discontinued for the time being. This suggestion immediately aroused Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, once Jackson's antagonist in a wild frontier brawl, now the Jacksonian leader in the Senate and a sturdy defender of the West. Always suspicious of New England, he charged that the proposal to stop land sales was intended to keep New England workers from going West and thus to choke off the growth and prosperity of the frontier.

A young, debonair senator from South Carolina, Robert Y. Hayne, took up the argu-

ment after Benton. Hayne and other Southerners hoped to get Western support for their drive to lower the tariff, and at the moment they were willing to grant abundant and cheap lands to the Westerners in exchange for such support. He hinted that the South and the West might well combine in self-defense against the Northeast.

Daniel Webster, now a senator from Massachusetts, once had been a state-rights and antitariff man but, like Calhoun, only in reverse, he had changed his position with the changing interests of his section. The day after Hayne's speech he took the floor in an effort to head off the threatened rapprochement of the West and the South and thus to protect the interests of New England, including the tariff interest. Ignoring Benton, he directed his remarks to Hayne and, through him, to Calhoun in the Vice President's chair. He reviewed much of the history of the republic, with occasional disregard for historical facts, to prove

#### **Webster Replying to Hayne**

*Hayne is sitting in the front center, with his hands together. Calhoun, presiding as Vice President, leans intently on his desk, in the shadow at the extreme left. Note the bonneted ladies in the gallery and the page in the left foreground. From G. P. A. Healy's painting, which hangs in Faneuil Hall, Boston. (Courtesy of Edward J. Kennedy and the Frick Art Reference Library)*





that New England always had been the friend of the West. Referring to the tariff of 1816 he said that New England was not responsible for beginning the protectionist policy but had accepted it after other sections had fixed it upon the nation. Then, changing the subject, he spoke gravely of disunionists and disunionism in South Carolina.

Thus he challenged Hayne to meet him, not on the original grounds of the public lands and the tariff, but on the issue of state rights versus national power, an issue that could be made to seem one of treason versus patriotism. And in due time Hayne, coached by Calhoun, came back with a flashing defense of the nullification theory. It took Webster two afternoons to deliver what schoolboys were afterward to know as the second reply to Hayne. "I go for the Constitution as it is, and for the Union as it is," he declaimed, as he turned to an exposition of the "true principles" of the Constitution. "It is, Sir, the people's Constitution, the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people." And he meant one people, the whole nation. He concluded with the ringing appeal: "Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!"

Calhoun's followers were sure that Hayne had the better of the argument. The important question at the moment, however, was what President Jackson thought and what side, if any, he would take.

An answer soon was given at a Democratic banquet that was supposed to honor Thomas Jefferson as the founder of the party. At the banquet the friends of Calhoun hoped to build up the alliance of South and West and strengthen his presidential prospects by identifying his principles with those of Jefferson. As was customary at such affairs, the guests settled down after dinner to an evening of drinking toasts. The President, forewarned by Van Buren, was ready with a toast of his own, which he had written down, underscoring certain words. When his turn came, he stood up and proclaimed: "Our Federal Union—It must be preserved." While he spoke he looked sternly at Calhoun. Van Buren, who stood on his chair to see better from the far end of the table, thought he saw Calhoun's hand shake and a trickle of wine run down the outside of his glass. Calhoun responded to Jackson's toast with his own:

"The Union—next to our liberty most dear. May we always remember that it can only be preserved by distributing evenly the benefits and the burthens of the Union."

## STATE RIGHTS AND THE VETO

Jackson's pro-Union and antinullification feelings, as expressed in his Jefferson's birthday toast, did not mean that he was opposed to state rights as such. On the contrary, as he had declared in his inaugural address, he believed in none but "constitutional" undertakings by the federal government. During his administration he readily vetoed laws that he thought exceeded the powers originally granted to Congress by the states; in fact, he used the veto more freely than any President before him.

The Maysville Road Bill (1830) brought on the most significant of Jackson's vetoes. This bill, by authorizing the government to buy stock in a private company, would have given a federal subsidy for the construction of a turnpike from Maysville to Lexington, within the state of Kentucky. The Maysville pike was a segment of a projected highway that was to form a great Southwestern branch of the National Road. Nevertheless, since the pike itself was an intrastate and not an interstate project, Jackson doubted whether Congress constitutionally could give aid to it. Earlier (in 1822) President Monroe, vetoing the Cumberland Road Bill, had declared that the federal government should support only those improvements that were of general rather than local importance, and Jackson then had agreed with Monroe. Now, with Van Buren's assistance, Jackson prepared a veto message based on similar grounds. He also urged economy, denounced the selfish "scramble for appropriations," and stressed the desirability of paying off the national debt. Though Jackson also refused to sign other appropriation bills, he did not object to every proposal for federal spending to build roads or improve rivers and harbors. During his two terms such expenditures continued to mount, far exceeding even those of the John Quincy Adams administration.

The Maysville veto was not popular in the West, where better transportation was a never-ending demand, but Jackson's Indian policy was wholeheartedly approved in both the West and the South.

## INDIAN REMOVAL

As an old Indian fighter, Jackson was no lover of the red man, and he desired to continue and expedite the program, which Jefferson had begun, of removing all the eastern tribes to the west of the Mississippi. The land between the Missouri and the Rockies, according to such explorers as Lewis and Clark and Stephen H. Long, was supposed to be a vast desert, unfit for white habitation. Why not leave that land for the Indians? By the Indian Removal Act of 1830 Congress proposed to exchange tribal lands within the states for new homes in the West, and by the Indian Intercourse Act of 1834 Congress marked off an Indian country and provided for a string of forts to keep the Indians inside it and the whites outside. Meanwhile the President saw that treaties, nearly a hundred in all, were negotiated with the various tribes and that reluctant tribesmen along with their women and children were moved west, with the prodding of the army.

In the process of Indian removal there was much tragedy and a certain amount of violence. When (in 1832) Chief Black Hawk with a thousand of his hungry Sac and Fox followers—men, women, and children—recrossed the Mississippi into Illinois to grow corn, the frontiersmen feared an invasion. Militiamen and regular troops soon drove the unfortunate Indians into Wisconsin and then slaughtered most of them as they tried to escape. Such was the Black Hawk War, in which Abraham Lincoln was a captain of militia (he saw no action) and Jefferson Davis a lieutenant in the regular army.

More serious was the Seminole War. It began when Chief Osceola led an uprising of his tribesmen (including runaway Negroes), who refused to move west in accordance with a treaty of 1833, and the fighting lasted off and on for several years. Jackson sent troops to Florida, but the Seminoles with their Negro associates were masters of guerrilla warfare in the jungly Everglades. Even after Osceola had been treacherously captured under a flag of truce and had died in prison, the red and black rebels continued to resist.

Unlike the Sacs and Foxes or the Seminoles, the Cherokees in Georgia were a civilized people, with a written language of their own (invented by the half-breed Sequoyah in

1821) and with a settled way of life as farmers. Yet the state of Georgia, after getting rid of most of the Creeks, was eager to remove the Cherokees also and open their millions of acres to white occupation. In 1827 these Indians adopted a constitution and declared their independence as the Cherokee Nation. Promptly the Georgia legislature extended its laws over them and directed the seizure of their territory. Hiring a prominent lawyer, the Cherokees appealed to the Supreme Court. In the case of *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831) Chief Justice Marshall gave the majority opinion that the Indians were "domestic dependent nations" and had a right to the land they occupied until they voluntarily ceded it to the United States. In another case, *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832), Marshall and the Court held that the Cherokee Nation was a definite political community with territory over which the laws of Georgia had no force and into which Georgians could not enter without permission.

President Jackson did not sympathize with the Cherokees as President Adams had done with the Creeks. Vigorously supporting Georgia's position, Jackson did nothing to aid the Indians or to see that the rulings of the Supreme Court were carried out. The Chief Justice had implied that it was the President's duty to uphold the rights of the Indians. Jackson's attitude is well expressed in the comment attributed to him: "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it." The decision was never enforced.

In 1835 a few of the Cherokees, none of them a chosen representative of the Cherokee Nation, were induced to sign a treaty giving up the nation's Georgia land in return for \$5 million and a reservation in Indian Territory (Oklahoma). The great majority of the 17,000 Cherokees were unwilling to leave their homes, so Jackson sent an army of 7,000 under General Winfield Scott to drive them westward at bayonet point. About a thousand fled across the state line to North Carolina, where eventually the federal government provided a reservation for them.

Most of the rest—along with others of the "Five Civilized Tribes": Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles—made the long, forced trek to the West, beginning in midwinter, 1838. Along the way a Kentuckian observed: "Even aged females, apparently nearly

*The front page of the Cherokee Phoenix for February 21, 1828, presents the Constitution of the Cherokee Nation in both English and Cherokee. Sequoya (who is believed to have been the son of a part-Cherokee mother and a white father) had only recently, in 1821, completed the work of devising a Cherokee alphabet after twelve years of effort. (American Antiquarian Society)*

ready to drop in the grave, were travelling with heavy burdens attached to their backs, sometimes on frozen ground and sometimes on muddy streets, with no covering for their feet." Several thousand perished before reaching their undesired destination. In Indian Territory the survivors were never to forget the hard way by which they had arrived there. They called it "The Trail Where They Cried," the trail of tears.

### **SOUTH CAROLINA INTERPOSES**

In a sense Georgia nullified federal authority when, proclaiming state rights, she flouted the rulings of the highest court of the United States. In doing so, nevertheless, the state had the backing of the President. But when, in the midst of the Georgia controversy, another state attempted out-and-out nullification of an act of Congress, Jackson reacted quite differently.

After waiting four years for Congress to undo the "tariff of abominations," the South Carolina followers of Calhoun had little patience left, and they lost that when Congress denied them any real relief in the tariff of 1832.

Though making certain changes in individual rates, the new law did not lower the tariff, as a whole, enough to satisfy the cotton planters of the state. And the rice growers, though not concerned about the tariff, were apprehensive that slavery might be threatened if federal power remained unchecked.

Some of the South Carolinians now were ready for revolt, and had it not been for Calhoun's program and leadership, they might have taken even more drastic action than they did. Having ceased to be Jackson's friend and prospective successor, Calhoun had come out openly for nullification, elaborated the doctrine further, and induced the extremists to adopt it as their remedy. To nullify or not to nullify—that was the question in the state election of 1832. The nullifiers proved to be the majority, but their opponents (who called themselves Unionists) made up a large minority, the vote being approximately 23,000 to 17,000. Without delay the newly elected legislature called for the election of delegates to a state convention. The convention adopted an ordinance of nullification that declared null and void the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 and forbade the collection of duties, within the state. The legislature then

### **Nullification Ordinance [1832]**

Having failed to obtain relief from what most planters considered an oppressive and unfair tariff, South Carolina put Calhoun's theory into practice with the following resolutions:

*Whereas the Congress of the United States, by various acts, purporting to be acts laying duties and imports on foreign imports, but in reality intended for the protection of domestic manufactures, and the giving of bounties to classes and individuals engaged in particular employment, at the expense and to the injury and oppression of other classes and individuals, . . . hath exceeded its just powers under the Constitution, which confers on it no authority to afford such protection, and hath violated the true meaning and intent of the Constitution, which provides for equality in imposing the burthens of taxation upon the several States and portions of the Confederacy. . . .*

*We, therefore, the people of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain. . .*

*That the several acts and parts of acts of the Congress of the United States, purporting to be laws for the imposing of duties and imposts on the importation of foreign commodities . . . [especially the tariff acts of 1828 and 1832] . . . are unauthorized by the Constitution of the United States, and violate the true meaning and intent thereof, and are null, void, and no law, nor binding upon this State. . . .*

passed laws to enforce the ordinance and make preparations for military defense. Needing a strong man to take command at home, and another to present the South Carolina case ably in Washington, the nullifiers arranged for Hayne to become governor and for Calhoun to replace Hayne as senator. So Calhoun resigned as Vice President.

While the nullifiers prepared for war they hoped for peace. According to the Calhoun theory the federal government had no rightful recourse, and the rest of the states could do nothing except to amend the Constitution. When the theory was put to the test, however, not a single state came to South Carolina's support.

Unofficially the President threatened to hang Calhoun. Officially he proclaimed that nullification was treason and its adherents traitors. Jackson did not confine himself to mere words. Cooperating closely with the Unionists of South Carolina he also took steps to strengthen the federal forts in the state, ordering General Winfield Scott and a warship and several revenue cutters to Charleston.

When Congress met, the President asked for specific authority with which to handle the

crisis. His followers introduced a "force bill" authorizing him to use the army and navy to see that acts of Congress were obeyed. The force bill, like Jackson's proclamation, further antagonized the South Carolina extremists. Violence seemed a real possibility early in 1833, as Calhoun took his place in the Senate to defend his theory and its practice. He introduced a set of resolutions on the "constitutional compact" and then made a speech against the force bill.

Webster's reply to Calhoun (February 16, 1833), if less colorful than his reply to Hayne three years earlier, dwelt more fully and more cogently upon the constitutional issues at stake. The Constitution, Webster argued, was no mere compact among sovereign states that might secede at will. It was an "executed contract," an agreement to set up a permanent government, supreme within its allotted sphere and acting directly upon the people as a whole. Webster dismissed secession as a revolutionary but not a constitutional right, then denounced nullification as no right at all. The nullifiers, he said, rejected "the first great principle of all republican liberty; that is, that the majority must govern." They pretended to be con-

## Jackson's Proclamation [1832]

*Our present Constitution was formed . . . in vain if this fatal doctrine [nullification] prevails. It was formed for important objects that are announced in the preamble, made in the name and by the authority of the people of the United States, whose delegates framed and whose conventions approved it. The most important among these objects—that which is placed first in rank, on which all the others rest—is "to form a more perfect union." Now is it possible that even if there were no express provision giving supremacy to the Constitution and laws of the United States over those of the States, can it be conceived that an instrument made for the purpose of "forming a more perfect union" than that of the Confederation could be so constructed by the assembled wisdom of our country as to substitute for that Confederation a form of government dependent for its existence on the local interest, the party spirit, of a State? Every man of plain, unsophisticated understanding who hears the question will give such an answer as will preserve the Union. Metaphysical subtlety, in pursuit of an impracticable theory, could alone have devised one that is calculated to destroy it. . . .*

*The laws of the United States must be executed. I have no discretionary power on the subject; my duty is emphatically pronounced in the Constitution.*

cerned about minority rights, but did they practice what they preached? "Look to South Carolina, at the present moment. How far are the rights of minorities there respected?" Obviously the nullificationist majority was proceeding with a "relentless disregard" for the rights of the Unionist minority—"a minority embracing, as the gentleman himself will admit, a large portion of the worth and respectability of the state."

At the moment Calhoun was in a predicament. South Carolina, standing alone, itself divided, could not hope to prevail if a showdown with the federal government should come. If the nullifiers meekly yielded, however, they would lose face and their leader would be politically ruined. Calhoun was saved by the timely intervention of the Great Pacificator, Henry Clay. Newly elected to the Senate, Clay in consultation with Calhoun devised a compromise scheme by which the tariff would be lowered year after year, reaching in 1842 approximately the same level as in 1816. Finally Clay's compromise and the force bill were passed on the same day (March 1, 1833). Webster consistently opposed any concessions to the nullifiers, but

Jackson was satisfied: he signed the new tariff measure as well as the force bill.

In South Carolina the convention reassembled and repealed its ordinance of nullification as applied to the tariffs of 1828 and 1832. Then, as if to have the last word, the convention adopted a new ordinance nullifying the force act. This proceeding meant little, since the force act would not go into effect anyhow, the original ordinance (against which it was directed) having been withdrawn. The second nullification was intended to reinforce the impression that Calhoun's program was a success and was still to be reckoned with. Though Calhoun and his followers, having brought about tariff reduction, claimed a victory for nullification, the system had not worked out in the way its sponsors had intended. Calhoun had learned a lesson: no state could assert and maintain its rights by independent action. Thereafter, while continuing to talk of state rights and nullification, he devoted himself to building up a sense of Southern solidarity so that, when another trial should come, the whole section might be prepared to act as a unit in resisting federal authority.

## **Jackson and the Bank**

### **BIDDLE'S INSTITUTION**

The Bank of the United States was a private corporation with a charter from the federal government, which owned one-fifth of the stock. It was a monopoly, having an exclusive right to hold the government's deposits. With its headquarters in Philadelphia and its branches in twenty-nine other cities, it also did a tremendous business in general banking, totaling about \$70 million a year. Its services were important to the national economy because of the credit it provided for profit-making enterprises, because of its banknotes that circulated throughout the country as a dependable medium of exchange, and because of the restraining effect that its policies had upon the less well-managed banks chartered by the various states.

Nicholas Biddle, president of the Bank from 1823 on, had done much to put the company on a sound and prosperous basis. A member of an aristocratic Philadelphia family, Biddle was educated at the University of Pennsylvania and thereafter devoted himself to a number of intellectual interests, including poetry. He personally owned a large proportion of the Bank's stock, so much of it that together with two other large stockholders he controlled the Bank. He could and did choose the officials of the branches, decide what loans were to be made, and set the interest rates. For several years after he took charge he made these decisions according to financial considerations. A banker, not a pol-

itician, he had no desire to mix in politics. But he finally concluded it was necessary to do so in self-defense when, with the encouragement of Jackson, popular opposition to the Bank rose to a threatening pitch.

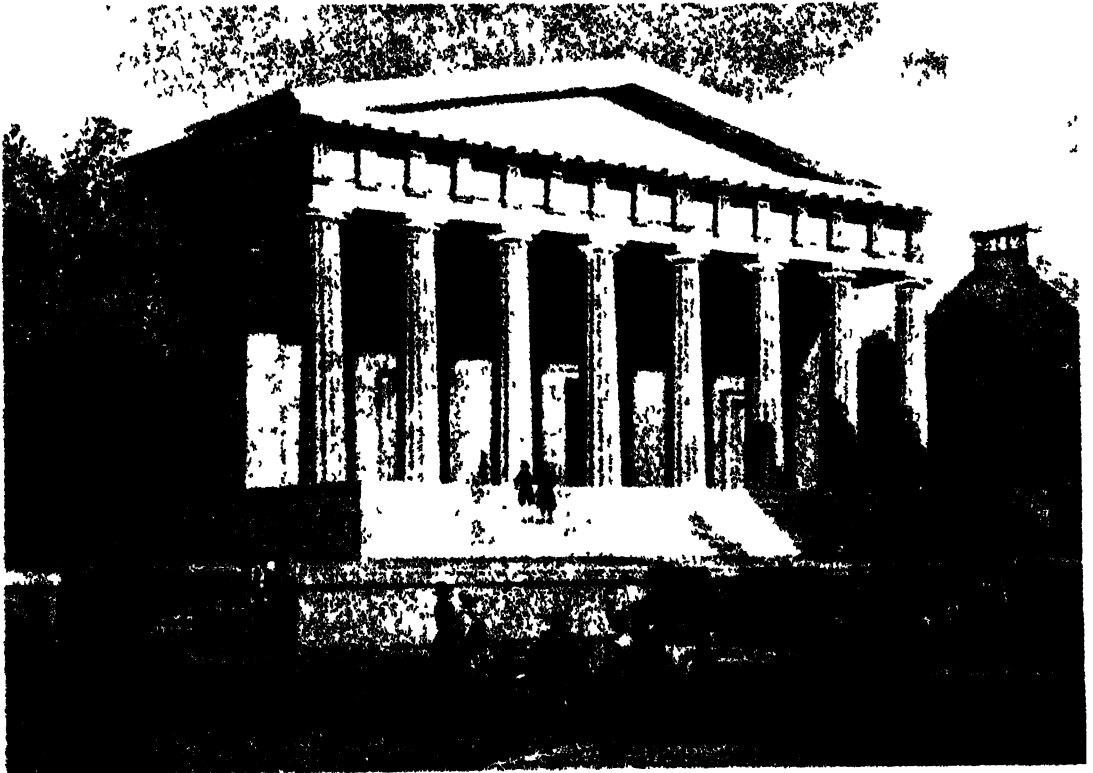
Opposition came from two very different groups, the "soft-money" and the "hard-money" men. The former, consisting largely of state bankers and their friends, objected to the Bank of the United States because it restrained the state banks from issuing notes as freely as some of them would have liked, through its policy of collecting such notes and presenting them for payment in cash. These critics of the

Bank desired more paper money (that is, bank notes circulating as money), not less. The other set of critics, the hard-money people, had the opposite complaint. Believing in coin as the only safe currency, these people condemned all banks of issue—all banks issuing bank notes—whether chartered by the states, as all but one of them were, or by the federal government, as the Bank alone was.

Jackson himself was a hard-money man. At one time in his life he had dealt in grandiose land and mercantile speculations based on paper credit. Then a financial panic (1797) ruined his business and put him deeply into debt.

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**The Second Bank of the United States**  
*Architecturally, the home office of the Bank, in Philadelphia, was an excellent example of the Greek Revival style. In 1818 architects were invited to submit competitive plans for "a chaste imitation of Grecian architecture." William Strickland won the competition with a design modeled on that of the Parthenon of ancient Athens. Benjamin H. Latrobe, who had submitted a similar plan, charged that Strickland had stolen the Latrobe design. After the expiration of the Bank's charter, the building became the Philadelphia Custom House. (The Granger Collection)*



Thereafter he was suspicious of all banks. After he became President he raised the question, in his inaugural address and in other statements, whether the charter of the Bank of the United States should be renewed. Unless renewed, it would expire in 1836.

To preserve the institution, Biddle began to grant banking favors to influential men in the hope of winning them to his side. At first he sought to cultivate Jackson's friends, with some success in a few instances. Then he turned more and more to Jackson's opponents. He extended loans on easy terms to several prominent newspaper editors, to a number of important state politicians, and to more than fifty congressmen and senators. In particular, he relied upon Senators Clay and Webster, the latter of whom was connected with the Bank in various ways—as legal counsel, director of the Boston branch, frequent and heavy borrower, and Biddle's personal friend.

Clay, Webster, and other advisers persuaded Biddle to apply to Congress for a recharter bill in 1832, four years ahead of the expiration date. After investigating the Bank and its business, Congress passed the recharter bill. At once Jackson vetoed it, sending it back to Congress with a stirring message in which he denounced the Bank as unconstitutional, undemocratic, and un-American. The veto stood, for the Bank's friends in Congress failed to obtain the two-thirds majority necessary for overriding it. And so the Bank question emerged as the paramount issue of the coming election, just as Clay had fondly hoped it would.

In 1832 Clay ran as the unanimous choice of the National Republicans, who had held a nominating convention in Baltimore late in the previous year. Jackson, with Van Buren as his running mate, sought reelection as the candidate of the Democratic Republicans, or Democrats. Still another candidate was in the field, representing a third party for the first time in American history. He was William Wirt, a prominent Baltimore lawyer and man of letters, the nominee of the Anti-Masonic party. Though he preferred Clay to Jackson, Wirt drew more votes away from the former than from the latter, though he did not draw a great many from any source, carrying only the state of Vermont. The legislature of South Carolina gave that state's electoral vote in protest to a man who was not even a candidate, John

Floyd, one of Calhoun's Virginia followers. Of the remaining electoral votes, Jackson received more than five times as many as Clay.

### THE "MONSTER" DESTROYED

Jackson took his decisive reelection as a sign that the people endorsed his views on the Bank of the United States. As soon as the nullification crisis had been disposed of, he determined to strike a blow at this banking "monster," this dangerous money power, as he saw it. He could not put an end to the Bank before the expiration of its charter, but at least he could lessen its power by seeing to the removal of the government's deposits. By the law establishing the Bank, the secretary of the treasury had to give the actual order for removing them. When the incumbent secretary refused to give the order, Jackson appointed a new one, and when this man procrastinated, Jackson named a third, Roger B. Taney, previously the attorney general and a member of the Kitchen Cabinet. Taney was more than willing to cooperate.

With Taney at the head of the Treasury Department, the process of removing the government's deposits was immediately begun. The government stopped putting new funds in the Bank, but continued paying its bills by drawing on its existing deposits, which steadily dwindled. Meanwhile the government opened accounts with a number of state banks, depositing its incoming receipts with them. These banks, including one in Baltimore with which Taney himself was associated, were chosen presumably on the basis of their financial soundness but not always without consideration of their political leanings. Jackson's enemies called them his "pet banks." By 1836 there were 89 of them.

The proud and poetic Biddle, "Czar Nicholas" to Jacksonians, was not the man to give in without a fight. "This worthy President," he wrote sarcastically, "thinks that because he has scalped Indians and imprisoned Judges, he is to have his way with the Bank. He is mistaken." Biddle struck back when the Jackson administration began to transfer funds directly from the Bank of the United States to the pet banks. He felt that the loss of government deposits, amounting to several millions, made it necessary for him to call in loans and raise interest rates, since the government deposits had





**"The Downfall of Mother Bank"**

*This 1832 cartoon shows President Jackson destroying the Bank of the United States and driving away its corrupt supporters by means of his order withdrawing government deposits from the Bank (Library of Congress)*

served as the basis for much of the Bank's credit. He realized that, by making borrowing more difficult, he was bound to hurt business and cause unemployment, but he consoled himself with the belief that a short depression would help to bring about a recharter of the Bank. "Nothing but the evidence of suffering," he told the head of the Boston branch, would "produce any effect in Congress."

During the winter of 1833-1834, with interest high and money scarce, there was suffering indeed, as many businessmen failed and thousands of workers lost their jobs. All over the country, friends of the Bank organized meetings to adopt petitions begging for relief from Congress, petitions that delegates then brought in person to Washington and that pro-Bank senators or representatives introduced with appropriately lugubrious speeches. But Jackson and the Jacksonians denied responsibility.

When distressed citizens appealed to the President he answered, "Go to Biddle."

The banker finally carried his contraction of credit too far to suit his own friends among the anti-Jackson businessmen of the Northeast, and some of them did go to Biddle. A group of New York and Boston merchants protested (as one of them reported) that the business community "ought not and would not sustain him in further pressure, which he very well knew was not necessary for the safety of the bank, and in which his whole object was to coerce a charter." To appease the business community he at last reversed himself and began to grant credit in abundance and on reasonable terms.

The "Bank War" was over, and Jackson had won it. But, with the passing of the Bank of the United States (in 1836), the country lost an indispensable financial institution. Economic troubles lay ahead.

## Whigs Against Democrats

During the Bank War the opponents of Jackson not only formally censured him in the Senate but also denounced him throughout the country for his allegedly high-handed and arbitrary actions. His opponents often referred to him as a tyrant, "King Andrew I," and they began to call themselves "Whigs," after the party which in England stood traditionally for limiting the power of the King. At the end of a single term for Jackson's hand-picked successor, who had the misfortune to preside over the worst business depression yet, the Whigs outdid the Democrats in demagoguery and turned them out of office.

### PARTY PRINCIPLES

The Whig party, organized in time for the congressional elections of 1834 and the presidential election of 1836, was an aggregation of dissimilar groups. It included the National Republicans who had opposed Jackson in 1828 (some of these were old Federalists, others former Jeffersonian Republicans), and it also included many people who had supported Jackson in 1828 but had turned against him afterward because of his stand on internal improvements, nullification, or the Bank. Some of the Whigs, as in Virginia, were really state-rights Democrats who had broken with the President when he threatened to use force against a sister state, South Carolina. On the whole the new party was strongest among the merchants and manufacturers of the Northeast, the wealthier planters of the South, and the farmers most eager for internal improvements in the West. But the party as a rule did not appeal very strongly to the mass of voters. Throughout its existence of twenty years or so the party was able to win only two presidential elections (1840 and 1848), both of them with military heroes as its candidates.

In Jackson the Democrats had a military hero and popular leader whom no Whig could match. True, each of the two foremost Whigs, Clay and Webster, had a devoted following. The glamorous Clay, "Harry of the West," won friends throughout the country—but not enough friends ever to elect him President,

though he was a candidate three times. The eloquent Webster gained fame and respect for his speeches expounding the Constitution and upholding the Union, and some of his businessman admirers thought him a greater man than any President. But his close connection with the unpopular Bank of the United States and his dependence on rich men for his financial support disqualified him in the minds of many voters. He and Clay were bitter rivals, and their rivalry weakened the party, though at times they cooperated in politics. Sometimes associated with them and sometimes opposing them was Calhoun, the third member of what came to be known as the Great Triumvirate. Calhoun did not consider himself a Whig: after his break with Jackson he thought of himself as a no-party man. Nevertheless he joined with Webster and Clay on the Bank issue. One thing the three men and all Whigs had in common was their opposition to Jackson and most of what he stood for.

Jackson and his party, in the course of his two presidential terms, developed a fairly definite and coherent political philosophy. The Jacksonians believed in *laissez faire*. That is, they believed that the government should let economic activities pretty much alone. They proposed the elimination of governmental favors to private enterprise, the destruction of government-granted monopolies and other corporate privileges. Then in theory the people through free and fair competition would be able to take care of themselves, each prospering in accordance with his own labor and skill. The worst of poverty and of social inequality would thus be done away with when the government ceased to help the rich and hinder the poor. While the Democrats did not advocate social revolution, the more radical of them (known as "Loco Focos") maintained that revolutionary violence might unfortunately appear unless economic inequalities were removed.

Calhoun agreed with the Loco Focos that the dangers of class struggle were very real, and he explored the nature and prospects of the struggle more thoroughly than anyone else of his time. Long before Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published their *Communist Mani-*

*festio* (1848) he elaborated a similar view, though he hoped to prevent revolution whereas they intended to hasten it. In his *South Carolina Exposition and Protest* (1828) and in later writings he predicted that capitalist society would tend to divide into only two classes, "capitalists" and "operatives," that the former would appropriate and impoverish the latter, and that a revolutionary crisis would eventuate. "There is and always has been in an advanced stage of wealth and civilization," he insisted (1837), "a conflict between labor and capital." He hoped that the revolutionary danger would cause Northern businessmen to join with Southern planters in self-defense.

Webster, the leading Whig philosopher, stoutly denied the contentions of Calhoun and the radical Democrats. "In the old countries of Europe there is a clear and well-defined line between capital and labor," Webster conceded, but he declared there was no line so "broad, marked, and visible" in the United States. If there was any revolutionary discontent among the American people, he charged, it was due to the policies of the Jackson administration and the clamor of Democratic agitators. He maintained that the people had common interests rather than conflicting ones, at least so long as the government pursued the correct policies. He believed that a wise and active federal government, by stimulating and regulating economic activity through a national banking system, a protective tariff, and expenditures for internal improvements, could assure the economic well-being of all the people and thereby harmonize the interests of every section and class.

Thus both parties thought of themselves as representing the best interests of the whole country, though they differed in their notions of the appropriate means of achieving the general welfare. For the time being the Democrats were in power and their policies prevailed.

Party feeling affected opinions on foreign as well as domestic affairs. The Whigs opposed Jackson on an issue of foreign policy when he became involved in a dispute with France. A number of American citizens held claims against the French government on account of ships seized or destroyed under Napoleon's decrees before the War of 1812. In 1831 the French government agreed to pay 25 million francs in partial satisfaction of these so-called

spoliation claims. The French Chamber of Deputies, however, failed to appropriate money for making the payment. Demanding that France make good its acknowledged debt, Jackson recommended to Congress the confiscation of French property in this country. The French took this as an insult to their national honor and insisted upon an apology. Though he refused to apologize, Jackson explained that he had meant no insult. As if expecting war he asked Congress (1835) for appropriations to build up the navy and the fortifications along the coast. The Whigs, denouncing him as a warmonger, voted against such appropriations. Despite political opposition at home, he won a diplomatic victory when the Chamber of Deputies at last provided funds and the debt was paid.

### THREE AGAINST ONE 1836

At stake in the party contests of the time were not only issues of foreign and domestic policy but also questions of federal jobholding and other prerequisites of political power. The Democrats had the power and the jobs; the Whigs wanted them. As the presidential election of 1836 approached, the Democrats had the advantages of patronage, Jackson's prestige, and a superior party organization. Jackson, not desiring a third term for himself, was able to choose the President to succeed him. The Democratic convention readily nominated his favorite, Van Buren.

The Whigs in 1836 could boast no such unity and discipline. Indeed, they could not even agree upon a single candidate. Their strategy, masterminded by Biddle, was to run several candidates, each of them supposedly strong in part of the country. Webster was the man for New England, and Hugh Lawson White of Tennessee was to seek the votes of the South. The former Indian fighter and hero of the War of 1812 from Ohio, William Henry Harrison, was counted upon in the middle states and the West. As Biddle advised: "This disease is to be treated as a local disorder — apply local remedies — if General Harrison will run better than anybody else in Pennsylvania, by all means unite upon him." None of the three candidates could expect to get a majority in the electoral college, but separately they might

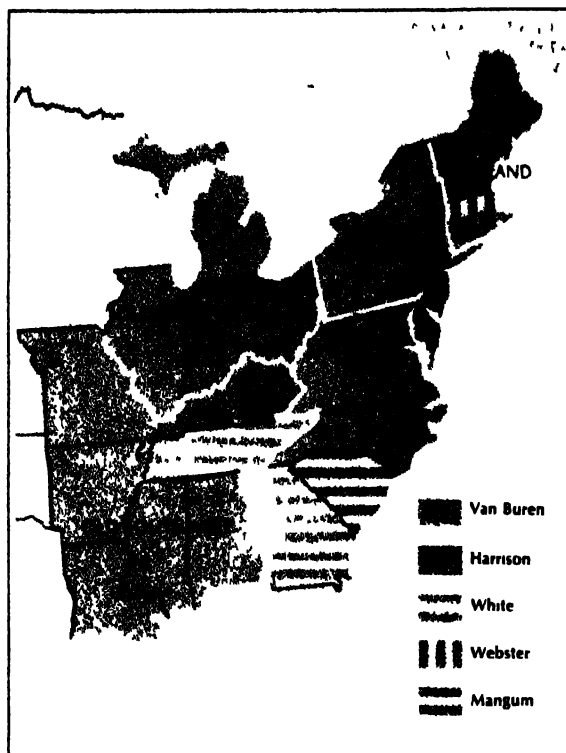
draw enough votes from Van Buren to prevent his getting a majority. The election would then devolve, as in 1824-1825, upon the House of Representatives, where conceivably the Whigs might be able to elect one of their men.

The three Whigs proved to be no match for the one Democrat. When the returns were in, Van Buren had 170 electoral votes to 124 for all his opponents. Again the South Carolina legislature gave the state's 11 electoral votes to a man who was not a regular candidate — Willie P. Mangum, of North Carolina. One of the Whig leaders of New York, William H. Seward, explained the victory of Van Buren thus: "The people are for him. Not so much for him as for the principle they suppose he represents. That principle is Democracy."

## THE PANIC OF 1837

At the time of the election of 1836 a nationwide boom was reaching its height. Canal enterprisers and railroad builders were busy digging ditches and laying tracks here, there, and everywhere. Prices were high and going higher, as people indulged in an orgy of spending and speculating. Money was plentiful. Much of it came from abroad, English investors buying large amounts of American corporation securities and state bonds. Most of it was manufactured by the banks, which multiplied their loans and notes with little regard to their reserves of cash, until, by 1837, bank loans outstanding amounted to five times as much as in 1830. Never had the nation seemed so prosperous.

Land as usual was a favorite speculation, especially the land sold by the federal government. After the act of 1821 had abolished installment buying and set the minimum price at \$1.25 an acre, sales of public lands reached an average of 300,000 to 400,000 acres a year in the late 1820s and early 1830s. Then the business suddenly boomed. Between 1835 and 1837 nearly 40 million acres were disposed of, and the expression "doing a land-office business" came into use to describe fast selling of any kind. Nearly three-fourths of the land being sold went to speculators — men acquiring large tracts in the hope of reselling at a profit — and only about a fourth of it to actual settlers. Spec-



### Election of 1836

ulators generally borrowed from the banks to make payment at the land offices.

For the time being the government profited. Receipts from land sales, which had averaged less than \$2.4 million annually for the ten years preceding 1835, rose to more than \$24 million in 1836. This was the government's largest source of revenue, but customs duties under the compromise tariff of 1833 added considerably to total income. The government received more money than it paid out. Steadily the national debt was reduced, as Jackson insisted it should be, and finally from 1835 to 1837 the government for the first and only time in its history was out of debt. Not only that: there was also a large and growing surplus in the federal treasury.

The question for Congress and the administration was how to get rid of the treasury surplus. Tampering with the tariff was not to be

considered, since the recent compromise had put to rest that touchy subject and few wanted to reopen it

Why not give the federal surplus to the states? This would be an effective way of getting rid of it, and the idea appealed to Congress. In 1836 Congress passed and Jackson signed a distribution act providing that the surplus accumulated by the end of the year (estimated at \$40 million) be paid to the states in four quarterly installments as a loan without security or interest each state getting a share proportional to its representation in Congress. No one seriously expected the "loan" to be repaid. As the states began to receive their

shares, they promptly spent the money, mainly to encourage the construction of highways, railroads, and canals. The distribution of the surplus thus gave further stimulus to the speculative boom. At the same time the withdrawal of federal funds strained the "pet banks," for they had to call in a large part of their own loans in order to make the transfer of funds to the state governments.

Congress did nothing to check the speculative fever, with which many congressmen themselves were badly infected, Webster for one buying up thousands of acres in the West. But the President was much concerned. Though money continued to pour into the trea-

#### The Panic of 1837

*The banner beneath the flag reads July 4th 1837 61st Anniversary of Our Independence. Militiamen parade to observe the occasion but the people instead of watching are preoccupied with their troubles. Mechanics stand idle with their tools. The only busy places are the shop of Shylock Graspall Licensed Pawnbroker where the unemployed seek loans with which to buy liquor the Mechanics Bank where depositors try to get cash for their worthless bank notes and the Sheriff's Office where property is being sold for unpaid taxes. From a contemporary lithograph (Courtesy of the New York Historical Society)*



surety from the land offices, most of it was money of dubious value. The government was selling good land and was receiving in return a miscellaneous collection of state bank notes, none of them worth any more than the credit of the issuing bank. Jackson finally decided to act. He issued his Specie Circular (1836) announcing that in the future only hard money or the notes of specie-paying banks would be accepted in payment for public lands. This was but one sign of trouble ahead for prosperity-crazed Americans.

Van Buren had been President less than three months when the panic broke. The banks of New York, followed by those of the rest of the country, suddenly suspended specie payments (that is, they stopped paying cash on demand for their bank notes and other obligations). During the next few years hundreds of banks failed, and so did hundreds of other business firms. As unemployment grew, bread riots occurred in some of the larger cities. Prices fell, especially the price of land, which now became a burden to the recently optimistic speculators, Webster being only one of a great many who all at once found themselves "land-poor." Many railroad and canal schemes were abandoned; several of the debt-burdened state governments ceased to pay interest on their bonds and a few repudiated their debts, at least temporarily. The depression, the worst the American people ever had experienced, lasted for about five years.

The Whigs blamed Jackson for the depression. It had come, they said, because of his destruction of the national bank and his mismanagement of public finance. But they were also in part to blame. The distribution of the treasury surplus was a Whig measure, though Jackson signed it (with the onset of the panic, the distribution was halted before the entire surplus had been transferred to the states). This step, by weakening the pet banks, helped to bring on the crash. So did Jackson's Specie Circular, which started a general run on the banks as land buyers rushed to get cash in return for banknotes to make land-office payments. Distribution of the surplus and the Specie Circular only precipitated the depression, however; they did not cause it.

While the Bank of the United States, if continued, could have lessened the overexpansion

of credit, a period of financial stringency doubtless would have come anyhow, sooner or later. For the depression was international, affecting England and Western Europe as well as the United States. As English investors faced a financial crisis at home, they began to withdraw funds from America, thus accounting for part of the strain on American banks. A succession of crop failures on American farms not only reduced the purchasing power of farmers but also necessitated imports of foodstuffs; to pay for these imports, additional money was drawn out of the country.

Besides its economic consequences, the Panic of 1837 had other significant results. Hard times increased social, sectional, and economic tensions. Want in the cities heightened the feeling that there existed even in America a real and dangerous class conflict—a struggle between the poor and the rich. Heavy losses suffered by Southern planters confirmed them in their conviction that national policies worked to their disadvantage, while the decline of business profits in the North intensified the belief of manufacturers that the compromise of 1833 must be undone and the tariff raised. Defaults on interest payments and outright repudiation of state bonds, many of them held by Englishmen, added to difficulties in the relations between the United States and Great Britain. Distress among the people was turned into dissatisfaction with the administration, so that the predominance of the Democrats was brought temporarily to an end after Van Buren had served but a single term.

### THE VAN BUREN PROGRAM

The modern concept that government can successfully fight depressions, and has an obligation to do so, simply did not exist in President Van Buren's time. The only tradition of government intervention in economic matters was the Federalist-National Republican-Whig program of aid to business, to which Democrats were fiercely opposed. Consequently Van Buren recommended but few direct antidepression measures. He advised Congress to authorize the borrowing of \$10 million to meet expenses during the emergency, and Congress did so. He

also urged that the government should accept only specie for taxes and other due payments, a policy that would not raise either prices or confidence in the banking system.

In formulating a program of permanent legislation, the administration clearly reflected the wishes of the dominant farmer-labor segment of the party. The President urged Congress to reduce the price of public lands, and he recommended passage of a general preemption bill giving settlers the right to buy 160 acres at a set minimum price before land in any particular area was opened for public sale. A bill graduating land prices downward passed the Senate three times but was blocked in the House. A similar fate befell the preemption bill. His program of agrarian reform foiled by legislative opposition, Van Buren had to resort to executive action to please his urban followers. By presidential order he established a ten-hour work day on all federal works. For the first time in the nation's history the government thus took direct action to aid the rising labor class.

The most important measure in the President's program, and the most controversial, was his proposal for a new fiscal system. With the Bank of the United States destroyed and with Jackson's expedient of "pet banks" discredited, some kind of new system was urgently needed. Van Buren's fiscal ideas demonstrate both his mental ingenuity and his sincere devotion to Democratic principles. The plan he suggested, known as the "Independent Treasury" or "Subtreasury" system, was simplicity itself. Government funds would be placed in an independent treasury at Washington and in subtreasuries in specified cities throughout the country. Whenever the government had to pay out money, its own agents would handle the funds. No bank or banks would have the government's money or name to use as a basis for speculation. The government and the banks would be "divorced."

Van Buren placed the Independent Treasury proposal before Congress in a special session he called in 1837. It encountered the immediate and bitter opposition of most Whigs and of many conservative Democrats. Twice a bill to establish an independent treasury passed the Senate only to fail in the House. Not until 1840, the last year of Van Buren's presidency, did

the administration succeed in driving the measure through both houses of Congress.

## THE LOG CABIN CAMPAIGN

As the campaign year of 1840 approached, the Whigs scented victory. The effects of the depression still gripped the country, and the Democrats, the party in power, could be blamed for the depression. So reasoned the Whigs, who now realized that a party representing the upper-income groups must, if it expected to win, pose as a party of the people.

The Whigs also realized that they would have to achieve more unity and a stronger organization than they had demonstrated in 1836. They would have to settle on one candidate who could appeal to all segments of the party and to all sections of the country. Obviously the easiest way to coordinate the party was through the new mechanism of the national nominating convention, already used by the Democrats. Accordingly the Whigs held their first convention in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in December 1839. Their veteran leader, Henry Clay, "Mr. Whig," expected the nomination, but the party bosses decided otherwise. Clay had too definite a record; he had been defeated too many times; he had too many enemies. Passing him over, the convention nominated William Henry Harrison of Ohio, and for Vice President, John Tyler of Virginia.

William Henry Harrison was a descendant of the Virginia aristocracy, but he had spent all his adult life in the Northwest, where he first went as a young army officer in General Wayne's campaign against the Indians. Though he had little governmental experience, he was a renowned Indian fighter (like Jackson) and a popular national figure.

The Democrats, meeting in national convention at Baltimore, nominated Van Buren, pointed proudly to their record, especially the Independent Treasury, and condemned all the works of Whigs, especially the Bank of the United States. Demonstrating that their party was, in some respects, no more united than the Whigs, the Democrats failed to nominate a vice-presidential candidate, declaring vaguely that they would leave the choice of that office to the wisdom of the voters.



#### Whig Broadside of 1840

This Whig campaign document depicts the principal episodes in the career of General Harrison—from his humble log cabin beginnings to fame as soldier and statesman (Library of Congress)



The campaign of 1840 set a new pattern in American politics. It inaugurated the circus-carnival atmosphere that would mark presidential elections for years in the future and that would awe or amuse European beholders—vast meetings, shouting parades, party badges and other insignia, and campaign songs.

Throughout the campaign the eager Whigs were on the offensive. They depicted themselves as the party of the people and the party that could save the nation from depression. They said Van Buren was an aristocrat who used cologne, drank champagne, and engaged in other undemocratic and un-American practices. A Democratic newspaper unwisely sneered that Harrison was a simple soul who would be glad to retire to a log cabin if provided with a pension and plenty of hard cider. In a country where many people lived or had lived in log cabins, this was almost handing the election to the Whigs, and they took the cue. Yes, their candidate was a simple man of the people, they proclaimed, and he loved log cabins and cider (actually he was a man of substance and lived in a large and well-appointed house).

Thereafter the log cabin was an established symbol at every Whig meeting, and hard cider an established beverage. Hundreds of Whig orators bragged that they had been born in log cabins or apologized for having been brought into the world in more sumptuous edifices. Thousands of Whig auditors listened to these effusions and happily chanted the songs that turned every Whig gathering into a frenzy of enthusiasm: "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" and "Van, Van is a used-up man." Against such techniques and the lingering effects of the depression the Democrats could not avail. When the votes were counted in November, Harrison had 234 electoral votes to 60 for Van Buren. The Whig victory was not as sweeping as it seemed; of the popular vote, Harrison had 1,275,000 to Van Buren's 1,129,000, a majority of less than 150,000.

## THE TANEY COURT

Though the Democrats had lost control of the executive branch, they kept their hold on the Supreme Court. Jackson had been able to

appoint seven new justices; and so, of the nine members, seven were Democrats. And the Chief Justice after 1835, Roger B. Taney, was a Jacksonian of the Jacksonians.

Between the Marshall-dominated Court and the Taney-dominated Court there was no sharp break in constitutional interpretation. But there was a marked change in emphasis. Taney and the majority of his colleagues were moderate agrarian liberals. In general they tended to recognize the right of popular majorities, acting through state legislatures, to regulate private property rights and the activities of corporations. In general, without adhering at all to the doctrines of Calhoun, they were inclined to modify the nationalism of the Marshall Court.

The attitude of the Court was revealed in the case of *Charles River Bridge v. Warren Bridge* (1837). In briefest essence, the background of this case was as follows: one company had a charter from Massachusetts to operate a toll bridge for a specified period of years; the legislature authorized another corporation to erect a bridge that would be toll-free; the first company contended that the state's action was invalid because it was a breach of contract. It was the old question—Could a state alter an agreement with a corporation?—which in the Dartmouth College case Marshall had decided against the state. But now Taney, speaking for the Democratic majority, supported Massachusetts. Though he advanced legal precedents to justify the decision, Taney based his position broadly on Jacksonian social doctrine. The object of government, he said, was to promote happiness, and this purpose was superior to property rights: a state had power to regulate corporations if such action was necessary to achieve the well-being of the community. Although the decision opened the way to increased state control and was wildly denounced by conservatives, it really aided the development of business. Industry was not going to grow if older corporations could maintain monopolies and choke off the competition of newer companies.

Another Taney case that enlarged state powers was *Bank of Augusta v. Earle* (1839). The question here was whether a corporation chartered in one state could do business in another that wished to exclude it. The Court held

that under interstate comity a corporation had a general right to operate in other states, but that a state could, if it wished, exclude a foreign corporation or establish regulations for its entrance. This decision led many states to enact

regulatory laws for outside corporations. In the absence of any federal regulation of interstate commerce, these measures were the only restrictions on companies engaged in business on a regional or on a national scale.

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# The North and National Unity





## Eleven

Sectionalism—the rivalry of one part of the country against another—had its origins early in American history. Even in colonial times there were three great areas (New England, the middle colonies, and the South) that developed characteristics different enough to set them apart as distinct sections. As the country grew after independence, the composition of the sections changed, and sectional feelings were intensified. By the 1840s and 1850s three sections that could be distinguished were the Northeast, the Northwest, and the South. These were gradually reduced to two—the North and the South—and the antagonism between them increasingly threatened to disrupt the nation.

If the sectional division had been a mere matter of geography, the dividing line might have run in a different direction. The Appalachian range, a great natural barrier, separated the East from the West, and beyond it the Mississippi Valley formed a vast geographic unit. In the minds of statesmen of the early republic, these geographical facts seemed to indicate that a new trans-Appalachian nation might someday arise and declare its independence.

With the elimination of slavery in New England and the middle states, however, all these states came to constitute a single, more or less homogeneous area, the Northeast. The new states of the Northwest, where the Northwest Ordinance prohibited slavery, developed a somewhat similar free-labor economy, and these states were connected with the Northeast through the construction of canals and railroads. Those of the original states where slavery persisted comprised an increasingly distinctive South, and this section, with the westward spread of slavery, included the newer states of the Southwest. Thus the slave boundary cut across both the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi Valley. So terribly potent was the slavery issue that it distorted the natural lines of separation and cohesion.

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### Hoe's Printing Press

*The rotary press, which Robert Hoe and his son Richard patented in 1846, carried the type on a steam-powered revolving cylinder. Printing much more rapidly than the previous flat-bed press, the new "lightning press" revolutionized journalism by making possible the mass circulation of newspapers. (Collection of Business Americana, NMHT, Smithsonian Institution)*

There nevertheless remained strong forces tending to hold the North and the South together. Groups within each section had conflicting interests, which weakened sectional loyalties, and groups in both sections had common interests which led to intersectional cooperation. Improvements in transportation and communication provided a

better and better technological basis for national unity. And cultural nationalism persisted. Many people, especially in the North while priding themselves on the intellectual attainments of the United States continued to call for a civilization no longer imitative of Europe but distinctively American.

## The Northern Economy

Even without the moral question of slavery, the political and economic issues involved in the sectional controversy would have strained the national fabric. Many of the political questions of the 1840s and 1850s were economic in origin, and the economy of each section had much to do with determining its social and cultural as well as political views. In each section a particular economic activity predominated, and hence a particular class tended to control the wealth and lead the other classes in politics. In the Northeast, where industry and overseas commerce predominated, the manufacturers and bankers were the leaders. In the Northwest, where most of the people were small farmers, they themselves were uppermost in both economic and political life. In the South by contrast, though small farmers were the most numerous group, they yielded to the large planters, who exercised a controlling influence.

### THE NORTHEAST. BUSINESS

Between 1840 and 1860 American industry experienced a steady and, in some fields, a spectacular growth. In 1840 the total value of manufactured goods produced in the United States stood at \$483 million, ten years later the figure had climbed to over \$1 billion, and in 1860 it reached close to \$2 billion. For the first time the value of manufactured goods was approximately equal to that of agricultural products. In the cotton textile industry the number of spindles in operation doubled during this twenty-year period.

Industrial growth was greatest in the states of the Northeast. Most conspicuous in this part

of the country were the change from domestic or household manufactures to the factory system, the shift of economic power from merchant capitalism to industrial capitalism, the spread of the corporate organization in business, and other innovations that heralded the coming of modern America. A few figures will illustrate the industrial predominance of the Northeast. Of the approximately 140,000 manufacturing establishments in the country in 1860, 74,000 were located in this section; they represented well over half the total national investment in manufactures, and the annual value of their products was two-thirds of the national figure. Of the 1,311,000 workers in the entire country, about 938,000 were employed in the mills and factories of New England and the middle states.

Even the most highly developed industries still showed qualities of immaturity and were still far away from the production goals they would attain after 1865. The cotton manufacturers, for example, concentrated on producing goods of coarse grade, making little attempt to turn out fine items which continued to be imported from England. A similar situation existed in the woollens industry, which because of a short American supply of raw wool could not even meet the domestic demand for coarse goods. As yet, American industry, which exported very little, was unable to satisfy fully the wants of American consumers.

Technology and industrial ingenuity were, however, preparing the way for future American industrial supremacy. The machine tools used in the factories of the Northeast, such as the turret lathe, the grinding machine, and the universal milling machine, were better than

those in European factories. The principle of interchangeable parts, applied earlier in gun factories by Eli Whitney and Simeon North, was being introduced into other lines of manufacturing. Coal was replacing wood as an industrial fuel, particularly in the smelting of iron. Coal was also being used in increasing amounts to generate power in the steam engines that were replacing the water power that had driven most of the factory machinery in the Northeast. The production of coal, most of it mined in the Pittsburgh area of western Pennsylvania, leaped from 50,000 tons in 1820 to 14 million tons in 1860.

The great technical advances in American industry owed much to American inventors. The patent records reveal the growth of Yankee ingenuity. In 1830 the number of inventions patented was 544; in 1850 the figure rose to 993; and in 1860 it stood at 4,778. In 1839 Charles Goodyear, a New England hardware merchant, discovered a method of vulcanizing rubber; his process had been put to 500 uses by 1860, and the rubber industry was firmly established. In 1846 Elias Howe of Massachusetts constructed a sewing machine, upon which improvements were soon made by Isaac Singer. The Howe-Singer machine was soon employed in manufacturing ready-to-wear clothing. A little later, during the Civil War, it would supply the Northern troops with uniforms.

In an earlier period the dominant economic figure in the Northeast had been the merchant capitalist—the man who engaged in foreign or domestic trade, who invested his surplus capital in banks, and who sometimes financed small-scale domestic manufacturers. By 1840 merchant capitalism was in a state of decline, though the merchant by no means disappeared. In cities like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, there were important and influential mercantile groups that operated shipping lines to Southern ports—carrying away cotton, rice, and sugar—or dispatched fleets of trading vessels to the ports of Europe and the Orient. Many of these vessels were the famous clippers, the most beautiful and the fastest-sailing ships afloat. In their heyday in the late forties and early fifties, the clippers were capable of averaging 300 miles a day, which compared favorably with the best time then being made by steamships. Though the value of American exports, almost entirely agricultural in nature, increased from \$124 million in 1840 to \$334 million in 1860, American merchants in the 1850s saw much of their carrying trade fall into the hands of British competitors, who enjoyed the advantages of steam-driven iron ships and government subsidies.

It was not foreign rivalry, however, that caused the decline of the merchant capitalist, but rather the rise of the factory system in the

## John Murray Forbes

The migration of New England capital from overseas trade to manufacturing is mirrored in the career of John Murray Forbes (1813–1898). This cultured and charming merchant made a fortune in the China trade while still a young man. Returning to the United States, he continued his mercantile activities, but began to shift his interest and eventually his investments into textiles and other industries. In 1846 he turned his attention to railroads in the Mississippi Valley. He was the leading figure in the group of Eastern merchants who purchased and completed the Michigan Central Railroad from Detroit to Chicago. Forbes was also allied with New York capitalists who controlled the Illinois Central, the north-south route in Illinois that by 1858 linked Chicago and Cairo. At the same time Forbes and his associates took over and combined several lines into the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, the first line to enter Iowa from the east. Still another road that came under his guiding hand was the Hannibal and St. Joseph. In the Civil War and postwar period Forbes devoted his major energies to public service, but railroads continued to be his dominating economic interest. The railroad king had permanently replaced the merchant prince.

United States. The merchants saw greater opportunities for profit in manufactures than in trade. They shifted their capital from mercantile investments to industry, becoming owners and operators of factories or placing their money in companies operated by others. Indeed, one reason why industries developed soonest in the East was that the merchant class had the money and the will to finance them.

Many business concerns were owned by one man, by a family, or by partners. But, particularly in the textile industry, the corporation form of organization spread rapidly. In their overseas ventures the merchants had been accustomed to diversifying their risks by buying shares in a number of vessels and voyages. They employed the same device when they moved their capital from trade to manufacturing, purchasing shares in several textile companies.

Regardless of the forms of business organization, the industrial capitalists became the ruling class, the aristocrats of the Northeast. As they had sought and secured economic dominance, they reached for and grasped political influence. In politics, local or national, they liked to be represented by highly literate lawyers who could articulate their prejudices and philosophy. Their ideal of a representative was Daniel Webster of Massachusetts, whom the businessmen of the section, at considerable financial cost to themselves, supported for years in the United States Senate.

### THE NORTHEAST: FARMS AND LABOR

The story of agriculture in the Northeast after 1840 is largely one of economic deterioration. The reason for the worsening situation is simple: the farmers of this section could not produce goods in competition with the new and richer soil of the Northwest. Eastern farmers turned to a system of production that aimed at a rude self-sufficiency or to the cultivation of products that would not suffer from Western competition. Many went West and took up new farms or moved to mill towns and became laborers. As a result, the rural population in many parts of the Northeast continued to decline.

The centers of production shifted westward for wheat, corn, grapes, cattle, sheep, and hogs. In 1840 the leading wheat-growing

states were New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia; in 1860 they were Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Michigan. In the case of corn, Illinois, Ohio, and Missouri supplanted New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. In 1840 the most important cattle-raising areas in the country were in New York, Pennsylvania, and New England, but by the 1850s the leading cattle states were Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Iowa, in the West, and Texas in the South.

In some lines of agriculture the Northeast held its own or even surpassed the Northwest. As the Eastern urban centers increased in population, many farmers turned profitably to the task of supplying foods to the city masses, engaging in truck gardening (vegetables) or fruit raising. New York led all other states in apple production. Also stimulated by the rise of cities was dairy farming. The profits to be derived from supplying milk, butter, and cheese to local markets attracted many farmers in central New York, southeastern Pennsylvania, and various parts of New England. Approximately half of the dairy products of the country were produced in the East; the other half came from the West, with Ohio being the dairy center of that section. Partly because of the expansion of the dairy industry, the Northeast led other sections in the production of hay. New York was the leading hay state in the nation, and large crops were grown in Pennsylvania and New England. The Northeast also exceeded other areas in producing potatoes.

Most of the workers in Northeastern factories during the decade of the forties came from the native population of the section—from the farming classes that were being pinched off the land by Western competition. Almost half of the laborers were women and children, and in some industries, notably textiles, the percentage was much higher. The rural people who flocked to the mill towns in the hope of finding a better life soon discovered that their situation there was little if any better than it had been back on the farms. Most mill towns were cheerless, ugly places in which to live, and most factories were unsanitary, unhealthful buildings in which to work. The average workday was twelve to fourteen hours. The wages of skilled workers ranged from \$4 to \$10 a week; unskilled workers and women and children received \$1 to \$6 per week.

Workers attempted, with little success, to



persuade state legislatures to pass laws setting a maximum workday. New Hampshire, in 1847, enacted a statute providing that no person be required to work more than ten hours in one day unless he agreed to an "express contract" calling for greater time; in the following year Pennsylvania adopted a similar law for the textile and paper industries. These measures were largely inoperative because many employers forced prospective employees to sign agreements for longer hours. Three states—Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania—passed laws regulating child labor, but the statutes merely forbade the employment of minors for more than ten hours in a day without the consent of their parents. Probably the greatest legal victory achieved by labor was in a judicial case in Massachusetts. The supreme court of that state, in *Commonwealth v. Hunt* (1842), declared that unions were lawful organizations and that the strike was a lawful weapon. Other state courts gradually accepted the principles of the Massachusetts decision.

During the 1840s the factory labor supply of the Northeast was augmented by immigrants from Europe. The immigrant flood helped to delay the development of the labor organizations that had experienced a vigorous growth in the thirties but had been hard hit by the depression after 1837. Generally the newcomers were willing to work for less than the wages demanded by native workers. Labor never recovered, before 1860, the ground it had lost in the lean depression years. By the 1850s several national craft unions had been formed by such groups as machinists, hat workers, printers, molders, stone cutters, and a few others. But these were organizations of skilled workers, representing only a tiny minority of labor and manifesting almost no class awareness. The mass of laborers remained unorganized.

## THE NORTHWEST

There was some industry in the Northwest, more than in the South, and in the two decades before the Civil War the section experienced a steady industrial growth. By 1860 it had 36,785 manufacturing establishments employing 209,909 workers. Along the southern shore of Lake Erie was a flourishing industrial and commercial area of which Cleveland was

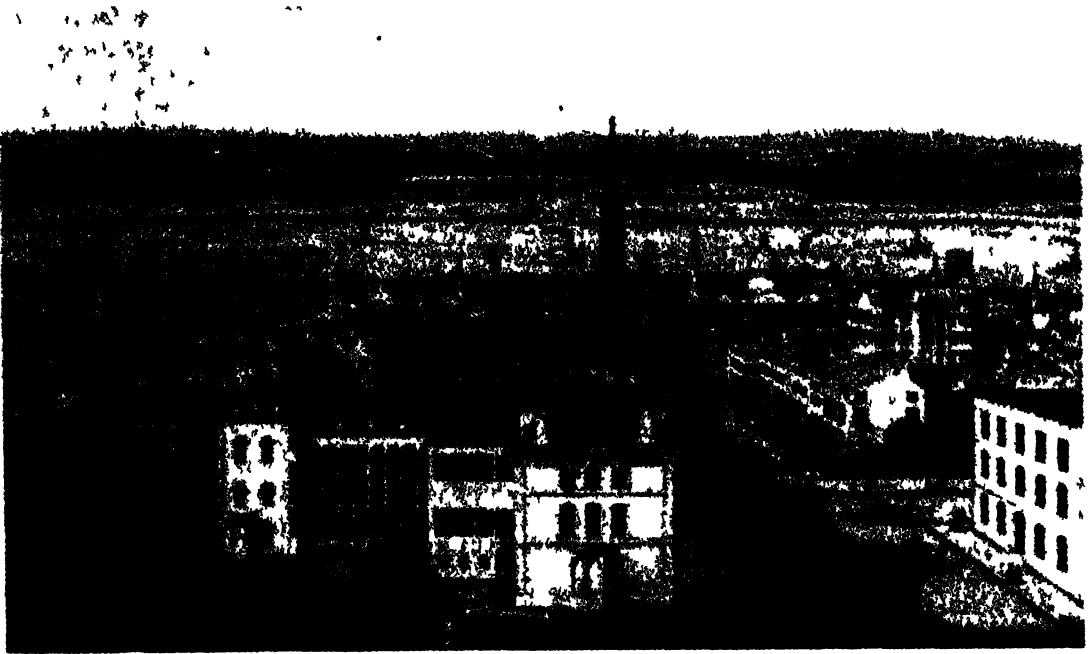
the center. Another manufacturing locality was in the Ohio River Valley, with the meat-packing city of Cincinnati as its nucleus. Farther west, the rising city of Chicago, destined to be the great metropolis of the section, was emerging as the national center of the agricultural machinery and meat-packing industries. The most important industrial products of the West were farm machines, flour, meats, distilled whiskey, and leather and wooden goods.

But the West predominantly was a land of family farms and small farmers. The average size of Western farms was 200 acres, and the great majority of the farmers owned their own land.

In concentrating on corn, wheat, cattle, sheep, and hogs, the Western farmer was motivated by sound economic reasons. As the Northeast became more industrial and urban, it enlarged the domestic market for farm goods. At the same time England and certain European nations, undergoing the same process, started to import larger amounts of food from the outside. This steadily increasing world-wide demand for farm products resulted in steadily rising farm prices. For the farmers, the forties and early fifties were years of prosperity.

The expansion of agricultural markets had profound effects on sectional alignments in the United States. Of the Northwest's total output, by far the greatest part was disposed of in the Northeast; only the surplus remaining after domestic needs were satisfied was exported abroad. The new well-being of Western farmers, then, was in part sustained by Eastern purchasing power. Eastern industry, in turn, found an augmenting market for its products in the prospering West. Between the two sections there was being forged a fundamental economic relationship that was profitable to both.

To meet the increasing demands for its products, the Northwest had to enlarge its productive capacities. The presence of large blocks of still unoccupied land made it possible to enlarge the area under cultivation during the 1840s. By 1850 the growing Western population had settled the prairie regions east of the Mississippi and was pushing beyond the river. Stimulated to greater production by rising prices and conscious of the richness of his soil, the average Western farmer engaged in wasteful, exploitative methods of farming that often resulted in rapid soil exhaustion.



#### St. Louis in the 1850s

*As the West grew in population and expanded its economy, its cities became larger. They began to assume the form and to exercise the functions of metropolitan centers in the East. This print shows one of the principal Western cities, St. Louis, as it appeared in the 1850s. Of the three major cities of the West, St. Louis and Cincinnati were older than Chicago and for years were more populous. But by 1860 the Lake Michigan city, experiencing a spectacular growth, was hard on their heels, and after the Civil War it would emerge as the metropolis of the section. (Courtesy Chicago Historical Society)*

Some improvements in farming methods did, however, find their way into use. New varieties of seed, notably Mediterranean wheat, which was hardier than the native type, were introduced in some areas, better breeds of animals, such as hogs and sheep from England and Spain, were imported to take the place of native stock. In nearly every case these and similar innovations were first tried out on Eastern farms, and later won whole or partial acceptance in the West.

Of greater importance were the improvements that Americans continued to introduce in farm machines and tools. During the forties more efficient grain drills, harrows, mowers, and hay rakes were placed in wide use. The cast-iron plow, devised earlier, continued to be popular because its parts could be replaced

when broken. An even better implement appeared in 1847 when John Deere established at Moline, Illinois, a factory to manufacture plows with steel moldboards, which were more durable than those made of iron and were also self-scouring.

Two new machines heralded a coming revolution in grain production. The most important was the automatic reaper, invented by Cyrus H. McCormick of Virginia. The reaper, taking the place of sickle, cradle, and hand labor, enabled a crew of six or seven men to harvest in a day as much wheat (or any other small grain) as fifteen men could harvest using the older methods. McCormick, who had patented his device in 1834, established in 1847 a factory at Chicago in the heart of the grain belt. By 1850 he was turning out 3,000 reapers a year by

1860, over 100,000 were in use on Western farms. Almost as helpful an aid to the grain grower was the thresher, which appeared in large numbers after 1840. Before that time, grain was flailed out by hand (seven bushels a day was a good average) or trodden out by farm animals (twenty bushels a day on the average). The threshing machines could thresh twenty-five bushels or more in an hour. Most of the threshers were manufactured at the Jerome I. Case factory in Racine, Wisconsin.

The Northwest was the most democratic of the three sections in the sense that the farmers, the majority, were the dominant economic

class and generally had their way in politics. Theirs was a capitalistic, property-conscious, middle-class kind of democracy. Abraham Lincoln, an Illinois Whig, voiced the economic opinions of many of the people of his section. "I take it that it is best for all to leave each man free to acquire property as fast as he can," said Lincoln. "Some will get wealthy. I don't believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good. . . . When one starts poor, as most do in the race of life, free society is such that he knows he can better his condition; he knows that there is no fixed condition of labor for his whole life."

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**Cyrus McCormick's Reaper**

*In 1831 McCormick demonstrated the first successful mechanical reaper near the town of Steele's Tavern, Virginia. Two men were required to operate the machine, one to ride the horse and the other to rake the grain stalks off the platform. Other workers followed to bind the grain. (Library of Congress)*



The democratic conservatism of the West was apparent in the program it advocated in national politics: internal improvements, cheap or preferably free lands, and territorial expansion.

### UNIFYING AND DIVISIVE FORCES

Between 1850 and 1860 the population of the United States rose by more than a third, from 23 million to over 31 million, as the nation continued its phenomenal human as well as material growth. Much of this increase was due to immigration. On the one hand, the immigrants stimulated a sense of nationalism, both because of their attachment to their new homeland as a whole (they had no inherited loyalty to any of the particular states) and because of the anti-foreigner and self-consciously "American" feeling that some of them aroused on the part of many of the native Americans. On the other

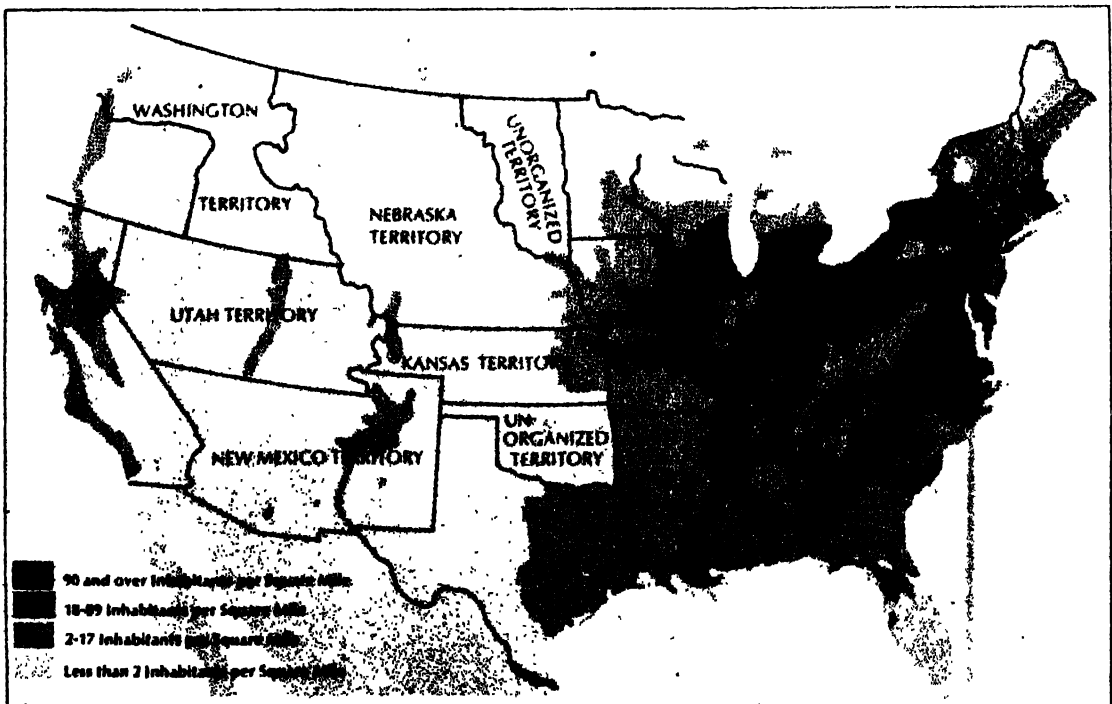
hand, the new arrivals contributed to social differentiation between North and South, since they did not distribute themselves evenly throughout the country but settled in much the larger numbers in the North.

A more positive unifying force was to be found, at least potentially, in the development of railroads and the introduction of the telegraph. "The fifties," writes the historian A. C. Cole, "saw the emerging outlines of a genuinely national system of transportation and communication."

### RISING IMMIGRATION

Between 1830 and 1840 only about 500,000 immigrants had entered the country, with the highest yearly figure, 84,000, being reached in 1840. Then the floodgates opened. From 1840 to 1850 over 1.5 million Europeans moved to

Population Density 1860



## Urban Growth [1840-1860]

In 1840 the largest cities in the country were in the Northeast and the South. But in the next two decades, as the East became increasingly industrialized, cities there shot ahead of their Southern rivals. The following figures show the comparative rates of growth

	1840	1850	1860
New York	312,000	515,000	805,000*
Philadelphia	220,000	340,000	565,000
Boston	93,000	136,000	177,000
Baltimore	102,000	169,000	212,000
New Orleans	100,000	116,000	165,000

\*Or 1,200,000 including Brooklyn

The most spectacular population gains were scored by the new Western cities. From 40,000 in the 1830s, Cincinnati climbed to 161,000 in 1860. In the same period St. Louis went from 10,000 to 160,000 and Chicago, astonishing everybody but itself, from 250 to 109,000.

America; in the last years of the decade the average number arriving yearly was almost 300,000. Of the 23 million people in the United States in 1850, 2,210,000 were foreign-born; of these almost 1 million were Irish and over 500,000 were German. Special reasons accounted for the prevalence of immigrants from Ireland and Germany: widespread poverty caused by the economic dislocations of the Industrial Revolution; famines resulting from the failure of the potato and other crops; dislike of English rule by the Irish; and the collapse of the liberal revolutions of 1848 in Germany. The great majority of the Irish settled in the Eastern cities where they swelled the ranks of unskilled labor. Not until after 1850, however, when the tide of immigration reached even greater heights, did foreigners outnumber the native-born in the labor population. Most of the Germans, having a little more money than the Irish, who had practically none, moved on to the Northwest, where they became farmers or went into business in the Western towns.

The number of immigrants who came in the fifties exceeded even that of the previous decade, reaching an estimated aggregate of over 2.5 million. As before, the overwhelming majority of the newcomers hailed from Ireland and Germany. By 1860 more than 1.5 million Irishmen had migrated to the United States, and approximately 1 million Germans. Other nationalities represented in the immigrant tide

were Englishmen, Frenchmen, Italians, Scandinavians, Poles, and Hollanders. Most of the foreigners collected in the urban centers of the Northern states. Almost half of the population of New York City consisted of aliens, and in St. Louis, Chicago, and Milwaukee the foreign-born outnumbered those of native birth. Few immigrants settled in the South. Only 500,000 lived in the slave states in 1860, and a third of these were concentrated in Missouri; of the Southern cities, only New Orleans contained a large number of foreign-born residents. Immigrants avoided the South partly because of the climate, partly because most of them were opposed to slavery or feared the competition of slave labor, but mostly because the bulk of them landed at Northern ports and from these points gravitated easily to areas in the North that attracted them.

In some cities and states the foreign vote assumed pivotal importance. Existing laws in many states permitted aliens to vote if they had been in the country for a year and had declared intention to seek citizenship. Particularly in the large cities, the politicians courted the immigrant voters with material favors, including outright money payments, and in some places it became common to buy votes in blocks. In general, the immigrants tended to affiliate with the Democrats, whose party they regarded as the representative of the common man.

## THE NATIVIST MOVEMENT

The presence of huge numbers of aliens occasioned the first important organized nativist movement in American history. While some natives recognized the contribution that the newcomers were making to the cultural and material development of their adopted land, many others disliked their ways and feared their influence. These critics contended that many of the immigrants were mentally and physically defective, that they created slums, and that they corrupted politics by selling their votes. Laborers complained that the aliens, willing to work for low wages, were stealing their jobs. Protestants, impressed by the aptitude that the Catholic Irish demonstrated for politics, believed, or affected to believe, that the Church of Rome was attaining an undue power in American government. Many Americans of older stock were honestly concerned that the immigrants would not assimilate into national life or would inject new and radical philosophies into national thought.

Out of these tensions and prejudices emerged a number of secret societies to combat the "alien menace." Originating in the East and later spreading to the West and South, these groups combined in 1850 to form the Supreme Order of the Star-Spangled Banner. Included in the official program of the order were opposition to Catholics or aliens holding public office and support of stricter naturalization laws and literacy tests for voting. When members were asked to define their platform, they replied, because of the secrecy rule, "I know nothing," and hence were dubbed "Know-Nothings."

Soon the leaders, deciding to seek their objectives by political methods, formed the so-called American party. In the East the new organization scored an immediate and astonishing success in the elections of 1854, casting a large vote in Pennsylvania and New York and winning control of the state government in Massachusetts. Elsewhere the progress of the Know-Nothings was more modest and tempered by local conditions. Western members of the party, because of the presence of many German voters in the area, found it expedient to proclaim that they were not opposed to naturalized Protestants. In the South, where Catholics were few, the leaders disavowed any reli-

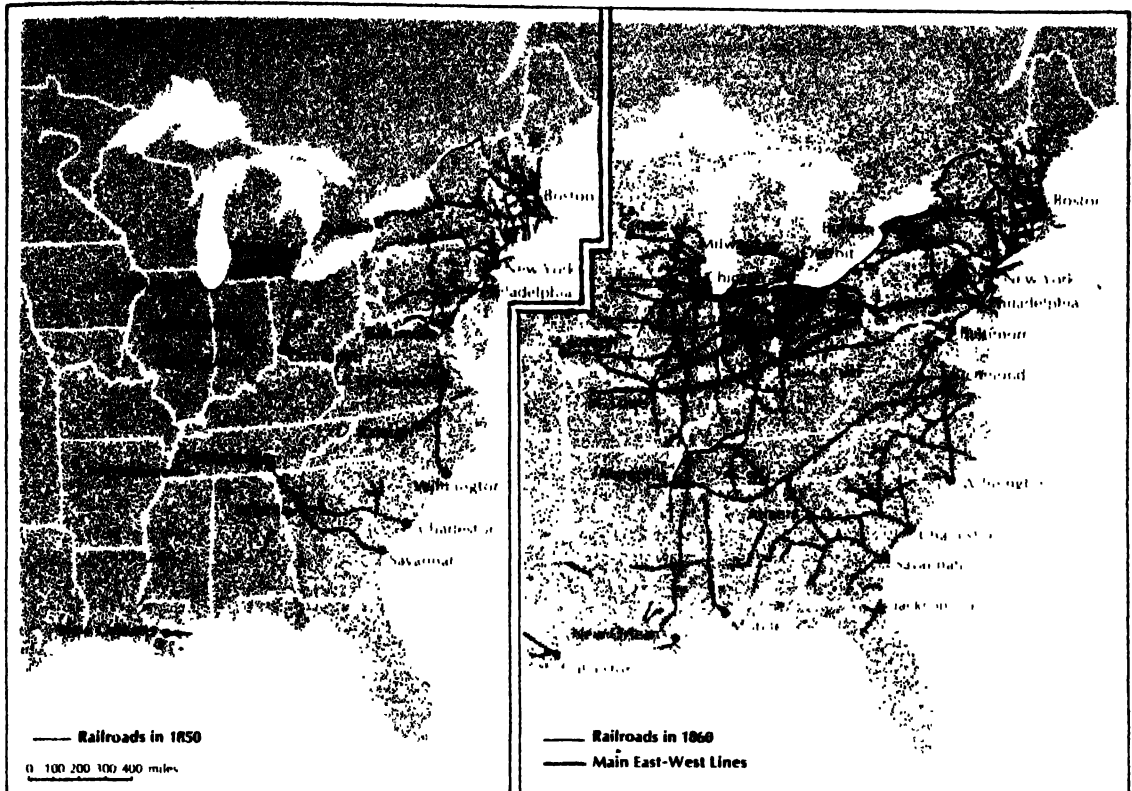
gious bias, and Catholics participated in the movement. The party's spectacular growth would soon be interrupted by the rise of the larger issue of slavery.

## DEVELOPMENT OF RAILROADS

The swelling domestic trade between East and West could not have developed without an adequate transportation system. In the 1830s most of the goods exchanged between the two sections were carried on the Erie Canal. After 1840 railroads gradually supplanted canals and all other modes of transport. In 1840 the total railroad trackage of the country was only 2,818 miles. There was a speed-up of construction in the forties, and by the end of the decade the trackage figure had risen to 9,021 miles. Most of the new lines ran east and west and several of them crossed New York State. The railroads enabled the Western farmers to ship their products cheaply and quickly to Eastern markets and thus helped to force many Eastern farmers out of business.

An outburst of railroad construction without previous parallel occurred in the fifties. The amount of trackage tripled between 1850 and 1860. The Northeast had the most efficient system, with twice as much trackage per square mile of land as the West and four times as much as the South. Railroads were reaching even west of the Mississippi, which at several points was spanned by iron bridges. One line ran from Hannibal to St. Joseph on the Missouri River, and another was being built from St. Louis to Kansas City. As for the South, many of its lines were short ones, and there were few through lines. Nevertheless, such towns as Charleston, Atlanta, Savannah, and Norfolk had direct connections with Memphis, and thus with the Northwest; and Richmond was connected, via the Virginia Central, with the Memphis and Charleston railroad. In addition, several independent lines furnished a continuous connection between the Ohio River and New Orleans.

A new feature in railroad development—and one that would profoundly affect the nature of sectional alignments—was the trend toward the consolidation of short lines into trunk lines. By 1853 four roads had surmounted the Appalachian barrier to connect the North-

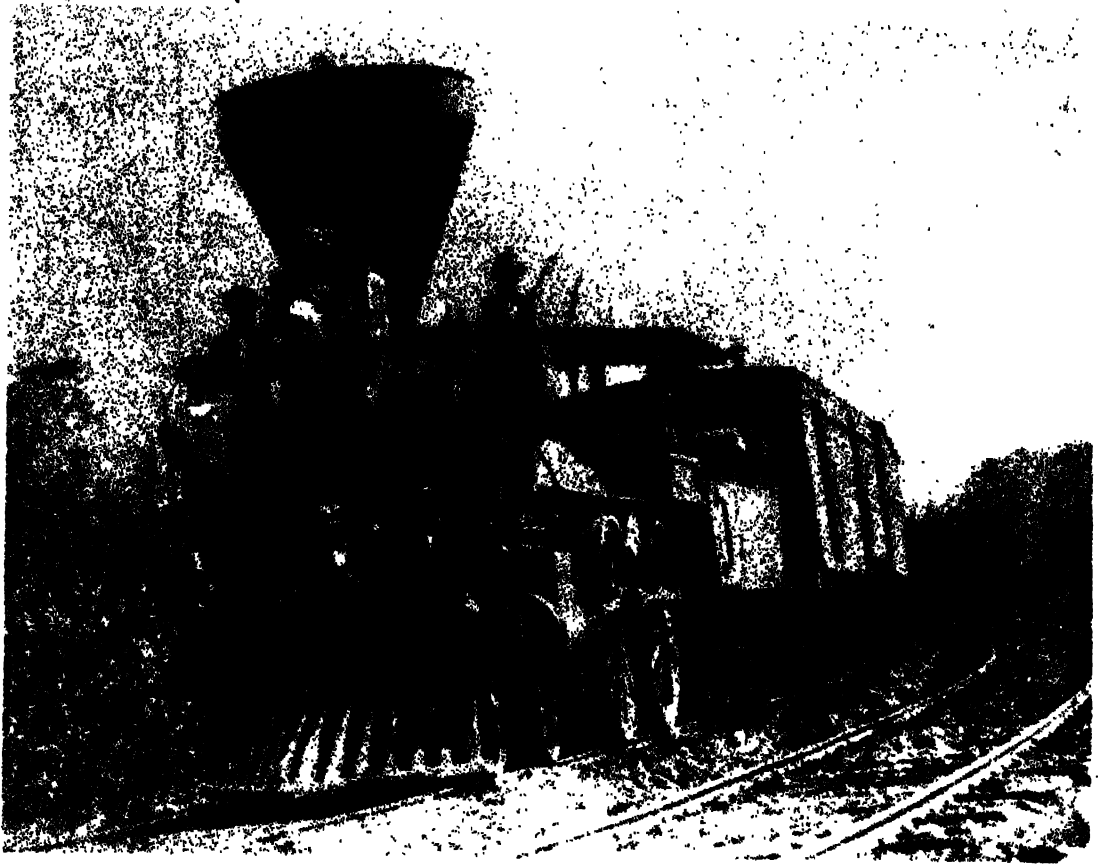


### The Growth of Railroads 1850-1860

east with the Northwest. Two, the New York Central and the New York and Erie, gave New York City access to the Lake Erie ports. The Pennsylvania road linked Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and the Baltimore and Ohio connected the Maryland metropolis with the Ohio River at Wheeling. From the terminals of these lines, other railroads into the interior touched the Mississippi River at eight points. Other important trunk routes were the Michigan Central and the Michigan Southern, which entered Chicago from the East, and the Rock Island and Chicago, which connected the Great Lakes and the Mississippi. Chicago became the rail center of the West, served by fifteen lines and over a hundred daily trains. The appearance of the great trunk lines tended to divert traffic from the water routes—the Erie Canal and the Mississippi River. By lessening the dependence of the West upon the Mississippi, the railroads helped to weaken the connection between the Northwest and the South. By binding more

closely the East and West, they prepared the way for a coalition of those sections.

At the opening of the century the average freight rate by wagon had been 33 cents per ton mile; the average passenger rate was 6 cents per mile. In the stagecoach era of the 1830s a trip from Boston to New York consumed forty-one hours; from New York to St. Louis, a distance of 1,600 miles, over three weeks were required. The average coach fare for 300 miles was \$15. The principal result of the advent of water transportation was to reduce freight charges. According to one estimate, the costs of traffic on the various means of transportation in 1840 were as follows: roads, 10 to 20 cents per mile; canals,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cents; lake steamers, 2 to 4 cents; river steamers,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cents; railroads,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents. Water transportation continued to be cheaper than railroad transportation, but the railroads could move goods in about half the time required on water. Railroad freight rates continued to decrease,



### A Railroad Train in the 1850s

By the 1850s locomotives in this country had become standardized according to what was known as the "American type." This had a cowcatcher, a four-wheel leading truck, two pairs of drive wheels, and a funnel-shaped smokestack with a screen to check the escape of sparks from the wood-burning boiler. Note the wood stacked in the tender. Posing on the locomotive are artists taking an excursion from Baltimore to Wheeling in June 1858. (Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company)

### Speed by Water and by Rail [1850s]

The following table indicates the rapidity of rail as compared with water travel and transportation between New York City and Western cities:

From New York To	Distance in Miles	Time by Water	Time by Railroads
Cleveland	700	9 days	3 days
Detroit	825	10 days	4 days
Chicago	1,500	14½ days	6½ days
St. Louis	1,600		12½ days



reaching by the decade of the 1860s an average of slightly less than 2 cents per ton mile.

Capital to finance the railroad boom came from various sources. Part of it was provided by American investors, and large sums were borrowed abroad. Substantial aid was provided by local governmental units—states, cities, towns, counties—eager to have a road to serve their needs. This support took the form of loans, stock subscriptions, subsidies, and donations of land for rights of way. The railroads also obtained assistance from the federal government in the shape of public land grants. In 1850 Senator Stephen A. Douglas and other railroad-minded politicians persuaded Congress to grant lands to the state of Illinois to aid the Illinois Central, then building toward the Gulf of Mexico; Illinois was to transfer the land to the Central as it carried its construction forward. Other states and their railroad promoters demanded the same privileges, and by 1860 Congress had allotted over 30 million acres to eleven states.

The operation of railroads was facilitated by the magnetic telegraph, the lines of which were extended along the tracks to connect one station with another.

### THE TELEGRAPH

Culminating several years of experimentation with an electric (magnetic) telegraph, Samuel F. B. Morse in 1844 transmitted from Baltimore to Washington the news of James K. Polk's nomination for the presidency. The Morse telegraph seemed, because of the relatively low cost of constructing wire systems, the ideal answer to the problems of long-distance communication. By 1860 over 50,000 miles of wire connected most parts of the country, and a year later the Pacific telegraph, with 3,595 miles of wire, was open between New York and San Francisco. Nearly all of the independent lines had been absorbed into one organization, the Western Union Telegraph Company. American enthusiasm for wire communication was not limited to the confines of the nation. Cyrus W. Field, a New York businessman, conceived the project of laying an Atlantic cable between Newfoundland and Ireland. With financial aid from associates and encouragement from the British and American governments, he com-

pleted a cable in 1858. Messages between Great Britain and the United States were exchanged, and man seemed to have accomplished another conquest of distance. But within a few weeks the cable went dead, nor could Field, who continued to believe in his idea, get it to work again. (After the Civil War, Field returned to his labors, and in 1866 succeeded in laying a permanent cable.)

### THE NEW JOURNALISM

In 1846 Richard Hoe invented the steam cylinder rotary press, making it possible to print newspapers at a much faster rate and a much lower cost. The development of the telegraph, together with the introduction of the rotary press, made possible much speedier collection and distribution of news than ever before. In 1846 the Associated Press was organized for the purpose of cooperative news gathering by wire; no longer did publishers have to depend on exchanges of newspapers for out-of-town reports.

Other changes in journalism also occurred. Originally Washington had been the national news center, and the papers published there had been government or party organs that filled their columns with dull documents and speeches. With the advent of the telegraph and the railroad and with the government's assumption of the function of public printing, the center of news transmission shifted to New York. A new type of newspaper appeared, one that was more attuned to the spirit and the needs of the new America. Although newspapers continued to concentrate on politics, they came to report more human interest stories and to record the most recent news, the happenings of yesterday, which they could not have done before the telegraph. The New York papers, and to a lesser degree those of other Northern cities, maintained corps of special correspondents to go into all parts of the country to cover any event that seemed newsworthy.

Most of the metropolitan journals were owned in whole or in part by their editors, who were also in many cases their founders; unlike modern newspapers they bore the imprint of a single personality and are often referred to as "personal" organs. The leading Northern pa-

pers were Horace Greeley's *Tribune*, James Gordon Bennett's *Herald*, and Henry J. Raymond's *Times*, all of New York. The *Herald* specialized in scandal and crime, the *Tribune* in self-improvement and social uplift. With a separate weekly edition, the *Tribune* served as a national or at least a sectional paper, having mail subscribers scattered throughout the Northeast and Northwest. Southern papers, with smaller budgets, tended to follow the older pattern of reporting mainly rather stale political news. The combined circulation of the New York *Tribune* and *Herald* exceeded that of all the dailies published in the South. In the country as a whole, there were more than 3,000 newspapers by 1860.

During the fifties Americans experienced the impact of a new kind of magazine journalism. In increasing numbers the upper and middle classes were reading monthly magazines that featured fiction and news articles by some of the country's outstanding writers. Easily the leader in this field was *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, with 170,000 subscribers, but competition was furnished by *Putnam's Magazine* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, both founded in the fifties. Another organ that appealed to the more literate groups was the New York religious-political weekly, the *Independent*, with a circu-

lation of nearly 100,000. For the edification of the masses there appeared the pictorial weeklies, lavishly illustrated with drawings by America's best popular artists. The pioneer among the picture journals was the *National Police Gazette*, established in 1845 by George Wilkes. It was also the most sensational, reporting "horrid murders, outrageous robberies, bold forgeries, astounding burglaries, hideous rapes, vulgar seductions." Other picture magazines reaching huge audiences were *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (1855) and *Harper's Weekly* (1857).

In one sense, the new journalism helped to feed the fires of sectional discord. The rapid reporting of detailed information regarding differences between the North and the South prompted people to anger more quickly and more often than otherwise would have been the case. But viewed in a longer perspective, the revolution in news was a unifying factor in American life. As one historian of journalism (L. M. Starr) has pointed out, the ultimate result of the news revolution was to endow the American people with that mystic sense of common destiny that is conveyed only by news of great events being reported everywhere simultaneously and soon after their occurrence.

## Persisting Cultural Nationalism

"In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book? or goes to an American play? or looks at an American picture or statue?" So asked the English wit Sydney Smith in the *Edinburgh Review* (1820), and he assumed that the answer was obvious—nobody. Like him, many cultivated Europeans believed that the American democracy was a cultural vacuum.

### DEMOCRACY AND CIVILIZATION

On the whole, British travelers in the United States confirmed Smith's impression of American culture. Occasionally these book-writing tourists had a kind word about the American and his habits. One of the most sympathetic, Harriet Martineau, author of *Society in Ameri-*

*ca* (1837), admitted that the American people already had realized many ideals for which the rest of the world still strove. Though Americans had their faults, she added, they could not be discouraged by them, for they "are in possession of the glorious certainty that time and exertion will infallibly secure all wisely desired objects." Even when the British were complimentary, however, they were inclined to be condescending. Much of the time they were highly critical. To them the typical Yankee seemed filthy, rude, ignorant, quarrelsome, boastful, and greedy, as well as sickly and sal-low. The Southerner seemed even worse, tyrannical and brutal, a beater of slaves. North, South, and West, the American male according to the British visitors was an inveterate tobacco chewer and spitter, with an aim that was none too good.

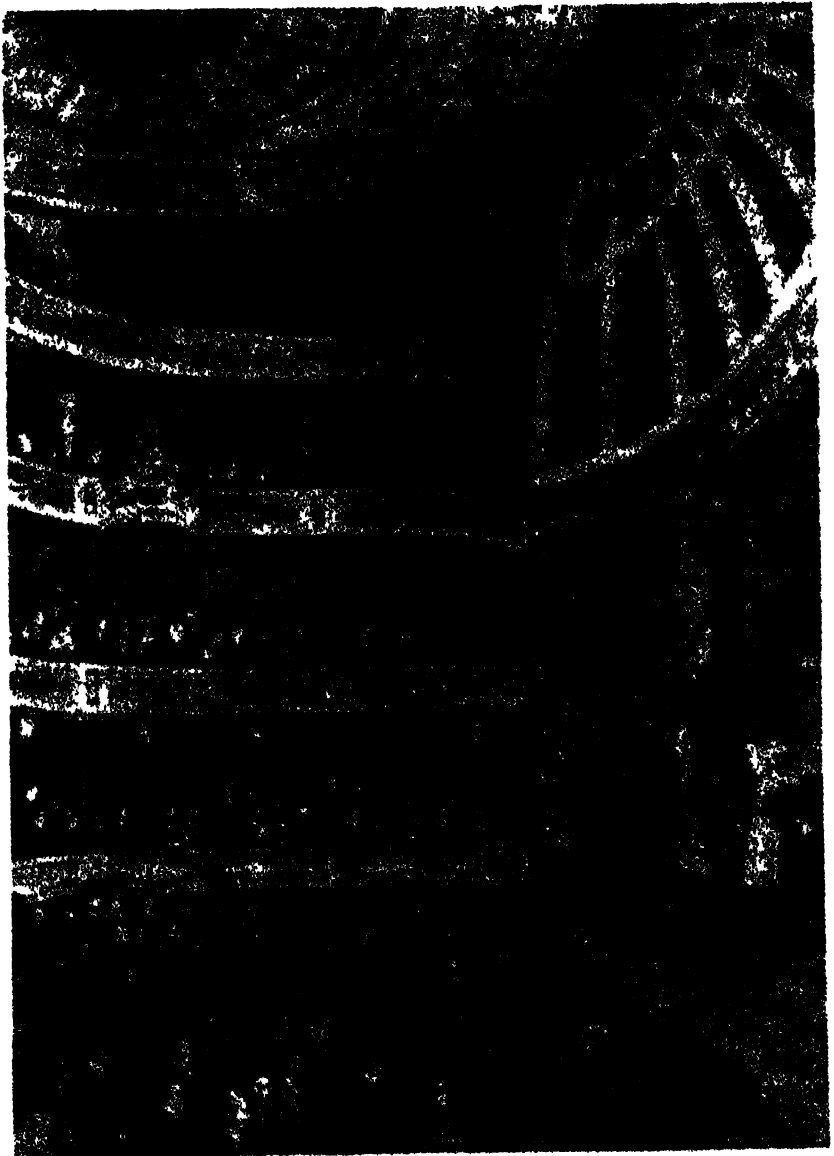
What these writers saw in America reflected their own prejudices as well as the objective facts. English authors, including Charles Dickens, were personally aggrieved because American publishers "pirated" their works, that is, reprinted them without paying royalties. Along with other Englishmen, men of letters also lost money by investing in state bonds that proved worthless or nearly so with the defaults and repudiations following the Panic of 1837. Quite

often the interpreters of the United States to the English public were Tories who feared democracy at home and therefore wished to discredit it abroad. They were fighting against the campaign to widen the suffrage in England, a campaign that culminated in the Reform Bill of 1832 and in the Chartist movement of 1848. Reviewers of the travel books in British quarterlies gave much attention to the criticisms of American democracy and pointed out the

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**The Park Theater**

*A comedy was being performed to a full house in the Park Theater, New York City, when John Searles made this watercolor drawing in November 1822 (Courtesy of The New-York Historical Society, New York City)*



seemingly obvious conclusion: true morality and real culture could have no place in a country where the will of the majority prevailed.

Quite different was the attitude of the young French visitor Alexis de Tocqueville, who welcomed political equality as the way of the future for France and the world. Even though he disapproved of much that he saw, he sought to understand American behavior, not to denounce it. Like the British observers, he concluded that Americans were backward in respect to science, literature, and the arts, but he did not blame their backwardness upon democracy. He wrote: "Their strictly Puritanical origin—their exclusively commercial habits—even the country they inhabit, which seems to divert their minds from the pursuit of science, literature and the arts—the proximity of Europe, which allows them to neglect these pursuits without relapsing into barbarism—a thousand special causes, of which I have only been able to point out the most important—have singularly concurred to fix the mind of the American upon purely practical objects."

Colonial attitudes persisted in America so far as things of the mind were concerned. Seldom was an American author appreciated at home until he had been praised by critics abroad, and sometimes not even then. In 1830, it has been estimated, 70 percent of the books sold in America were published in England. By 1840 this percentage had been drastically reduced, to only about 30. In the space of one decade the American book industry had grown tremendously, though most of the books had to be subsidized or else produced for advance orders secured by subscriptions. Despite the rise of book publishing in several American cities, especially in New York, the great majority of books published and sold were written, as before, by English authors. The romantic novels of Charles Dickens and Sir Walter Scott were as much the rage in the United States as in the British Isles. Scott was a special favorite among Southerners, who often applied Scott's word "Southron" to themselves, and who viewed their own section as the contemporary land of chivalry and romance.

American writers had other outlets for their wares in the hundreds of magazines that appeared and disappeared, their average life being about two years. In the best of these magazines some of the greatest of native au-

thors found a market for their works. In many other magazines, however, neither the writers nor their stories were great by any standard except popular appeal. The taste of most readers, especially women, was little different from that of their descendants who a century later were to listen to soap operas on radio or television. Sentimental tales of struggling womanhood were as popular a hundred years ago as now.

As in the Revolutionary era, the question of literary independence continued to draw much discussion from American writers. Some responded to British criticisms by declaring war again—the so-called war of the quarterlies—in which magazine replied to magazine, the Americans defending life in the United States and denouncing the customs of England. Instead of joining in such recriminations, a few thoughtful Americans called upon their countrymen for increased originality and creative effort. "The more we receive from other countries, the greater the need of an original literature," said William Ellery Channing (1830). He went on to contend: "A people into whose minds the thoughts of foreigners are poured perpetually, needs an energy within itself to resist, to modify this mighty influence, and without it will inevitably sink under the worst bondage, will become intellectually tame and enslaved." And Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his notable Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard (1837), urged scholars, philosophers, and men of letters to do all they could toward developing a self-reliant nationhood. But there were also arguments on the other side. Confessing that American literature was largely derivative, James Russell Lowell said (1849), "There is no degradation in such indebtedness"; and he suggested, "It may not be our destiny to produce a great literature."

#### LITERATURE: A GOLDEN AGE

Foreign critics were too severe and native commentators too modest in their appraisals of American letters. In retrospect the period from the 1820s to the 1850s has seemed, indeed, a kind of golden age of literature in the United States. It was the time of Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville, and Walt Whitman (all New Yorkers); Edgar

Allan Poe (a Southerner by affirmation though not by birth); and Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Nathaniel Hawthorne (New Englanders). All these writers contributed to world literature: sooner or later they won lasting renown abroad as well as at home. Besides them, a number of others gained the esteem at least of their own countrymen and their own generation.

Irving, author of the earliest American literary "classics," was the first to achieve foreign recognition. His *History of New York* (1809) aimed, in his words, "to embody the traditions of the city in an amusing form," and did so in the stories of an imaginary historian of Dutch descent, Diedrich Knickerbocker. Irving's most famous work, *The Sketch Book* (1819–1820), containing "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," made further use of the Dutch folklore of New York. Afterward Irving lived for a number of years in Spain and found story materials there, and still later he wrote historical works about the American West. A conservative in politics, he avoided contemporary political and social problems as literary themes. He did not disturb his readers with philosophical challenges but charmed them with his easy style and graceful art.

Cooper, a less polished but more prolific writer, turned out more than thirty novels in thirty years (1820–1850). Born into a well-to-do family, Cooper grew up in Cooperstown, New York, at a time when the frontier was not far away. He served for several years in the navy. Thus he knew the forest and the sea, the settings of his adventure stories. Among the most successful were *The Spy* (1821), a novel of the Revolutionary War, and several "Leatherstocking" tales, including *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and *The Deerslayer* (1841). Over and over Cooper used the same formula of heroic action, breathless pursuit, and narrow escape. A born storyteller, he held his readers' attention despite the stilted dialogue of his stylized characters—the noble red man, the resourceful pioneer, the virtuous maid, and the enemy villain. He created an enduring character in the frontiersman Natty Bumppo ("Leatherstocking"). In some of his novels and also in his essays Cooper turned to social criticism. As a Democrat with aristocratic ideals, he condemned the pushing, go-getting spirit of his fellow Americans.



Walt Whitman

This picture of the youthful, jaunty, bearded poet appeared as the frontispiece in the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1855). It is an engraving made from a painting by Francis B. Carpenter. Born in Homer, New York, and largely self-taught, Carpenter became one of the most successful portrait painters of the second half of the nineteenth century. He lived in the White House from February to July, 1864 while doing a canvas of Lincoln reading his emancipation proclamation to the cabinet. He afterward wrote *Six Months at the White House* (1866), giving an inside view of Lincoln at home. (New York Public Library)

Melville, once a sailor and a resident of the South Seas, had a background even more adventurous than Cooper's, and he too wrote narratives of adventure. But Melville was vastly more subtle and sophisticated in his writing, and he filled his stories with discursive philosophizing and extraordinary symbolism. The greatest of his books, *Moby Dick* (1851), is both an epic of man's industry and courage and a tragedy brought on by overweening pride. A great hero, Captain Ahab, destroys his ship, his crew, and himself in a mad attempt to get revenge on the white whale, *Moby Dick*, which

has maimed him and has thus become for him the embodiment of universal evil. For all the vividness of Melville's scenes, the depth and complexity of his characters, and the richness of his style, his plots move too slowly and his meaning was too obscure for the reading public of his time. A century later he was recognized as one of the greatest novelists ever to write in the English language.

Whitman, the self-proclaimed poet of American democracy, likewise was more widely appreciated by posterity than by his contemporaries, though some of them hailed him as the most original and authentic voice of the United States. The son of a Long Island carpenter, Whitman roamed the country and supported himself by odd jobs while composing his first poems. When he hired a printer to put out a thin volume of his work, *Leaves of Grass* (1855), he could find few buyers or readers, and he scandalized most of them. His verse, unconfined by rhyme, praised democracy and sang exuberantly of the flesh as well as the spirit. Whitman identified himself with the American people. He wrote:

*I celebrate myself, and sing myself,  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good  
belongs to you.*

Five more editions of *Leaves of Grass*, with added poems, appeared before Whitman's death (1892), and so did other volumes of poetry and essays, the most notable of which was *Democratic Vistas* (1871). His work eventually was translated into many languages. Today he is looked upon as a forerunner of twentieth-century poetry, a bold experimenter who liberated verse from restrictive conventions of form and content on the assumption that the "old forms must be fitted to the new age."

Poe, in a short and unhappy life that ended in 1849, made himself an even more controversial figure than Whitman. After briefly attending the University of Virginia and the United States Military Academy, Poe made a living as best he could by editing literary magazines and selling an occasional bit of writing. He devised a theory of aesthetics—supposedly based on music and mathematics—which he put into practice in his haunting onomatopoeic verse, his macabre, personality-probing tales (he invented the detective story), and his sharp liter-

ary criticism. His first book, *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), published anonymously, brought him little money and no fame, but he gained a national reputation with "The Raven" when it appeared in a newspaper in 1845. Some critics were contemptuous of his musical effects, and Emerson referred to him sneeringly as the "jingle man." In England, however, Alfred Lord Tennyson hailed Poe as a true, original poet, and in France Charles Baudelaire took him as an inspiration and a model. Indeed, Poe's writings influenced European literature far more than did those of any other nineteenth-century American.

### THE FLOWERING OF NEW ENGLAND

New York, where Poe spent his last years, had become the literary capital of the nation after 1820. Then during the 1840s and 1850s New York, as a center of authorship, was largely eclipsed by New England, if not by the one village of Concord, Massachusetts. Why there should have been such a literary "flowering" in New England is hard to explain. Of course, there was a long tradition of literacy and scholarship in the region. Ships returning from exotic ports throughout the world, including the Far East, brought in stimulating ideas along with profitable cargoes. Travelers, among them students attending German universities, returned with the stimulus of European romanticism. And the rise of industry altered society and the countryside, unsettling old habits and beliefs and, perhaps, provoking the imagination.

Emerson, leader of the Concord literary circle, began his career as a Unitarian minister, then resigned (1832) and devoted himself to the exposition of a transcendental philosophy. He derived his ideas partly from wide reading in the works of Plato, Plotinus, seventeenth-century Neoplatonists, and writers of China, Persia, and India. He was inspired even more by European travel and by conversation with English romantic authors such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle. From various sources Emerson put together a distinctively American philosophy of optimism, which saw reality as essentially good, and individualism, which stressed the capability of self-reliant man. Though he also wrote poetry, Emerson was most noted for his platform lectures, some

of which were condensed and revised for publication under the title *Essays* (1841–1844). Through both the printed and the spoken word, he reached and influenced a wide audience, though he did not convince all who read or heard him, not even all his friends. One admirer, Melville, thought him full of “oracular gibberish” at times.

Thoreau, a friend and disciple of Emerson's, built a shack in the woods on Emerson's property and lived there, beside Walden Pond, for two years. Afterward he explained: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.” He was delayed five years in finding a publisher for his account of the experience, which finally appeared as *Walden* (1854). A man of ruggedly honest principles as well as ruggedly honest prose, Thoreau meanwhile spent a night in jail for refusing to pay taxes for the support of what he considered an unjust government (the United States then being at war with Mexico). He justified his stand in *Resistance to Civil Government* (1849), an essay on “civil disobedience” or “passive resistance” that afterward influenced a number of revolutionaries abroad, among them Mahatma Gandhi in India.

Hawthorne, at different times a friend and neighbor of Emerson's and of Melville's, had an outlook more like Melville's than Emerson's. A latter-day Puritan, Hawthorne dwelt upon somber themes from the Puritan past, with a conviction that evil was a grim reality. In a series of magazine stories, collected in *Twice-Told Tales* (1837), he probed the psychology of sin, much as Jonathan Edwards might have done if Edwards had written fiction instead of theological treatises. Hawthorne's greatest success was *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), which is still regarded as one of the most nearly perfect of American novels. Treating the familiar triangle in an unfamiliar way, this psychological novel tells of the beautiful Hester Prynne, her husband, and her lover, and their very different responses to the evil in their lives.

Besides Emerson, Thoreau, and Hawthorne, there were other New England authors who, in their own time, enjoyed reputations as high or higher than any of those three. William Cullen Bryant, as a young man in the Berk-

shire Hills, wrote “Thanatopsis” and other poems that brought him a reputation as America's foremost poet by 1832, after he had moved to New York to edit a newspaper, the *Evening Post*. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a sedate Harvard professor, appealed to popular tastes with his short poems on familiar subjects, like the village blacksmith, and his long poems elaborating historic traditions, such as *Evangeline* (1847), *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855), and *The Courtship of Miles Standish* (1858). His books sold well—a total of 300,000 copies by 1857. Oliver Wendell Holmes, another Harvard professor, a physician who taught in the Medical School, had time to write light verse and witty essays. James Russell Lowell, the first editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, was a leading critic, essayist, and versifier. John Greenleaf Whittier, the “Quaker Poet,” composed gentle, homespun verse about rural life in New England—and not so gentle verse attacking slavery in the South.

Though each section had its historians, New England had the ablest. George Bancroft celebrated the successes of what he considered God's chosen people in his ten-volume *History of the United States* (1834–1882). Like many of the intellectuals of the time, Bancroft was a Jacksonian, and his political feelings were apparent when the first volume came out, though it dealt with the colonial beginnings and not with contemporary events. The book, critics said, voted for Jackson. Works of more enduring value, because of their literary quality and their critical use of evidence, were written by William H. Prescott, Francis Parkman, and John Lothrop Motley. These writers looked outside the United States for their subject matter—to Mexico and Peru, New France, and the Dutch republic.

## ARTS AND SCIENCES

In the arts of drama, painting, sculpture, and music, and in the sciences, Americans produced much less of originality and lasting value than in literature. Yet, even in those fields, Americans were not always wholly imitative during the four decades from 1820 to 1860.

The theater became increasingly popular, though not entirely respectable, despite its efforts to appear on the side of morality

through the presentation of temperance dramas like *The Drunkard* and *Ten Nights in a Bar-room*. Regular stock companies, English and American, toured the cities and larger towns. The companies depended on their stars to attract audiences. Fanny Kemble and William Charles Macready, both English, were outstanding attractions. So were the Americans Joseph Jefferson, who played the role of Rip Van Winkle before countless applauding audiences after 1859, and Edwin Forrest, famous for Shakespearean parts. Intense rivalries developed among celebrities and among their respective fans. In 1849 a mob of Forrest's admirers marched upon a New York theater where Macready was playing, and in the ensuing riot twenty-two persons were killed and many more injured. The legitimate stage often resorted to cheap showmanship to compete with such spectacles as circuses, minstrel shows, and "museums," containing freaks and oddities like the midget Tom Thumb. In the 1840s P. T. Barnum rose to become the leading promoter of these kinds of mass amusement.

Painters generally conformed to the sentimental taste of their customers, who demanded soft landscapes, flattering portraits, and story-telling pictures. Among the better artists, Asher B. Durand and others of the "Hudson School" concentrated upon natural scenery, William Sidney Mount portrayed his fellow Long Islanders at work and play, and George Caleb Bingham recorded everyday scenes of life in Missouri. The most successful sculptor was Hiram Powers, whose statue of a naked woman, entitled "The Greek Slave," attracted attention and provoked controversy on moral rather than esthetic grounds.

By the 1840s New York, Philadelphia, and Boston possessed orchestras of their own, and Americans flocked to the performances of such foreign celebrities as the Norwegian violinist Ole Bull and the "Swedish Nightingale" Jenny Lind. But American composers were rare, the most successful (judged by their enduring popularity) being John Howard Payne, Lowell Mason, and Stephen C. Foster. Payne, an actor and playwright, wrote "Home, Sweet Home" for an opera (1823). Mason, a Boston music teacher, composed the tunes for "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," and other stately hymns. Foster wrote "Oh! Susanna," "Old Black Joe," and more

than 200 other melodies, most of them to accompany his own verse. Many of these songs, written for blackface minstrel bands, convey a sense of genuine nostalgia for the plantation, though Foster was born in Pennsylvania and spent his brief and tragic life (1826-1864) in the Northeast.

Americans were more noted for applied science than for scientific theory. Nevertheless, from observation and experiment, some of them made significant contributions to scientific knowledge. John J. Audubon, pioneer ornithologist, published his exquisite sketches in *Birds of America* (1827-1838). Joseph Henry, the most original American scientist since Benjamin Franklin, made important discoveries in electromagnetism (thus preparing the way for Morse's invention of the telegraph). A Georgia physician, Crawford W. Long, demonstrated the practicability of ether as an anesthetic (1842).

The federal government sponsored some kinds of scientific work, though not as generously as it might have done had congressmen not opposed expenditures on grounds of thrift and state rights. Geographical knowledge was increased by the United States Coast Survey, begun in 1832, and by the United States Exploring Expedition, which between 1838 and 1842 surveyed extensive areas of the Pacific Ocean, under the leadership of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes. In the 1840s Congress voted funds to support the Naval Observatory and Hydrographical Office, an agency to study and report on nautical and astronomical subjects. Matthew Fontaine Maury became its director and began a monumental investigation of oceanography. In 1846 the Smithsonian Institution was founded in Washington, after an Englishman had willed his fortune of \$500,000 to the United States "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge." Appropriately the noted physicist Joseph Henry became the first head of the institution.

The leading colleges, Yale and Harvard, also served as important patrons of science. At Yale Benjamin Silliman taught chemistry and mineralogy for a half-century after his appointment in 1802, and for many years he edited the *American Journal of Science and Art*, after founding it in 1818. Though not a notable researcher, Silliman was an outstanding teacher who kept American students and scholars in-



formed of scientific developments throughout the world. At Harvard the zoologist and geologist Louis Agassiz and the botanist Asa Gray not only taught but also carried on important research in their respective fields. Through his studies of plant distribution Gray assisted the English scholar Charles Darwin in formulating

the theory of evolution. When Darwin's epoch-making book *On the Origin of Species* appeared (1859), Gray endorsed and Agassiz rejected the idea that plants and animals, instead of remaining unchanged since God created them, had developed through a process of natural selection.

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# Slavery and the South





## Twelve

America, the scene of Thomas More's sixteenth-century book *Utopia*, still seemed in the nineteenth century a land of utopian possibilities, at least to a great many Americans. To them, progress was a profound faith. As invention followed invention, they were confirmed in the belief that they lived in a wondrous age of increasing ease and plenty. Some assumed that progress in material things led automatically to progress in government and society as well. Others came to the conclusion that active effort would be needed to keep social improvement abreast of technological advance.

These progress-minded Americans were convinced that their country led the rest of the world in moral as well as material development. They sprang to the defense whenever foreigners criticized American ways, as foreigners often did. The Americans themselves, however, readily found fault with conditions in their own country when these conditions seemed to hinder the perfecting of society and man. There resulted a tumultuous and many-sided movement for social reform, which picked up momentum in the 1830s and continued through the 1850s.

From the reformers' point of view, one social evil came to stand out above all others. This was the plight of the more than 4 million Americans of African descent, most of whom were slaves, and the rest of whom were less than wholly free. Eventually the reform drive concentrated its main force on a single goal, the elimination of slavery.

Since all the slaves and nearly all the Negroes were concentrated in one section, the reform movement took on a sectional aspect. The economy and society of the South were based largely on the enslavement of the blacks, and most Southern whites feared the economic and social consequences of the slaves' liberation. The reform spirit—a "freedom's ferment"—had never stirred the South so much as it had the North, and with

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### **"Overseer Doing His Duty"**

*An ironic commentary on slavery, in which a white man takes his ease with a cigar while two black girls busy themselves with hoes. From a water color by the famous architect Benjamin H. Latrobe, who designed the Second Bank of the United States. He died in 1820. (The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe)*

the development of an antislavery crusade white Southerners resisted more strongly than ever the radical "isms" of the day as they rallied to a defense of their "peculiar

institution." Thus the nation began increasingly to divide on moral as well as economic and political grounds

## **Freedom's Ferment**

"In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used, or more unsparingly applied to a multitude of different objects, than in America," Tocqueville observed. "Societies are formed to resist enemies which are exclusively of a moral nature, and to diminish the vice of intemperance: in the United States associations are established to promote public order, commerce, industry, morality, and religion; for there is no end which the human will, seconded by the collective exertions of individuals, despairs of attaining."

Indeed, Americans organized reform societies of all kinds, not only for temperance but also for education, world peace, the care of the poor and the handicapped, the improvement of prisons, women's rights, the abolition of slavery, and dozens of other idealistic purposes.

### **SPIRIT OF SOCIAL REFORM**

This reform spirit derived from a variety of sources, religious and rational, domestic and foreign. The Christian doctrine of human worth, the Revolutionary philosophy of the equality of man—these were part of the general background. More immediately, the rise of industrialism in the British Isles and Western Europe as well as the United States produced social dislocations and suffering but at the same time gave promise of a more abundant life for all. No doubt, with some people, a determination to improve human welfare was stimulated by the contrast between what actually was and what apparently might be. The humanitarian stirrings of the time were to be found in many lands at once, and most conspicuously in those countries that were being most rapidly industrialized.

In Europe the agitation was in some ways quite different from that in this country. There,

it led to violent outbreaks, to the revolutionary attempts of 1830 and 1848. In America, where (except in the Southern states) there was no repressive government to contend with, the reformers had to fear violence only at the hands of unsympathetic mobs: reform did not mean revolt, though it culminated in the Civil War. Despite the differences in the American and European movements, American reformers often consulted and cooperated with their European counterparts, particularly with Englishmen. When it came to human betterment, cultural nationalism gave way to cosmopolitanism.

In Protestant countries the reform ethic was stronger than in Roman Catholic countries, which for the most part were less highly industrialized. Protestantism and reformism were closely related. In the United States the stimulus to reform came largely from two quite different Protestant trends—from the revivalistic, hellfire teachings of "New Light" Calvinists, on the one hand, and on the other hand from optimistic, salvation-for-all ideas of Universalists, Unitarians, and others who completely repudiated the tenets of Calvinism.

Emerson's philosophy of transcendentalism contributed to the reform spirit. Emerson evolved the doctrine of the Oversoul or spiritual essence from which all things derived, including the soul of man. Since all humanity shared in this essential Being, this all-in-all, there existed a very real brotherhood of mankind. And since the Oversoul was good, there could be no such thing, in the last analysis, as evil. (The later teachings of Mary Baker G. Eddy, founder of Christian Science, were in some respects similar to those of Emerson.) This philosophy, for all its obscurities and inconsistencies, had practical consequences for its believers. It made them optimistic. It taught them that they were potentially divine and could increase their divinity by identifying

## Transcendentalism and Reform [1837]

In his Phi Beta Kappa address "The American Scholar" which he delivered at Harvard College on August 31, 1837, Ralph Waldo Emerson presented a kind of intellectual declaration of independence for the United States. He set of adumbrated in transcendentalist philosophy speaking of the human mind as "the central fire" of a world which beams out of a thousand "and only" out of which animates all men. He suggested a relation ship between transcendentalism and reform in the following passage:

*It is a mischievous notion that we are come late into nature, that the world was finished a long time ago. As the world was plastic and fluid in the hands of God, so it is ever to so much of his attributes as we bring to it. To ignorance and sin it is fluid. They adapt themselves to it as they may, but in proportion as a man has any thing in him living, the firmament flows before him and takes his figure and form. Not he is great who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind. They are the kings of the world who give the color of their present thought to all nature, and art and persuade men by the cheerful serenity of their carrying the matter that this thing which they do is the apple which the ages have desired to pluck, not at first open, and muzzling nations to the harvest. The great man makes the great thing.*

themselves more and more fully with the Over-soul with Being, with Truth. It led them to believe in the perfectibility of man.

Still more important as a call to reform were the preachings of the revivalist Charles G. Finney, who was at first a Presbyterian and later a Congregationalist. In upstate New York and in Ohio, beginning in the 1820s, Finney delivered many a memorable sermon on the dangers of damnation and the possibilities of salvation—through good works as well as faith. "The church," he maintained, "must take right ground on the subject of Temperance and Moral Reform, and all the subjects of practical morality which come up for decision from time to time." Not all the churches did so, and some reformers (known as "come-outers") left the fold and even turned against organized religion, denouncing it as a bulwark to the status quo. Yet many churches heeded Finney's call, especially Presbyterian and Congregational churches, which provided more reform leaders than did any of the other Protestant sects, even the Quakers.

These leaders implied, by their activities, that they believed in a sort of earthly millenium as well as a heavenly one. Going a step further, one religious prophet together with his thousands of followers expected and awaited the actual second coming of Christ. From his studies of the Bible and from other signs and

calculations William Miller of Low Hampton, New York, predicted that on a certain day in 1843 Christ would appear and all true believers would ascend bodily to heaven. After new predictions and repeated disappointments he made the date indefinite. His followers formed a lasting sect, the Seventh-Day Adventists.

Miller and other prophets of the time, such as Finney and also Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, were New Englanders by birth and residents of upstate New York at some stage in their careers. So too the great majority of reform leaders were New England-born, and a large number of them lived at least temporarily in New York State. Most were descended from substantial New England families, neither rich nor poor, whose heads once had been highly respected as preachers, doctors, teachers, and farmers. With the rise of commerce and industry these families lost status in comparison with the upcoming merchants and manufacturers. The families who migrated to New York settled in counties that at first were economically dominant but that by the 1830s had fallen behind the rest of the state. These family backgrounds suggest that the typical reformer was unconsciously a product of social changes under way in the North.

The reform spirit was far more prevalent among Whigs than among Democrats. Though it affected some of the latter too, it cannot be

considered as essentially an extension of Jacksonian Democracy. The Jacksonians advocated political and economic reforms, such as the widening of the suffrage and the destruction of monopoly, but were far from unanimous in supporting social reforms, such as the abolition of slavery. Nor can the reform spirit be viewed as an outgrowth of the labor movement, except in certain cases, notably the drive for free public schools. Most reform leaders disbelieved in unions, opposed strikes, and were indifferent to the plight of the unemployed. William Lloyd Garrison, the abolitionist, denounced labor agitators for trying "to inflame the minds of our working classes against the more opulent, and to persuade men that they are contemned and oppressed by a wealthy aristocracy." A few of the "more opulent," such as the merchants Arthur and Lewis Tappan of New York and Amos and Abbott Lawrence of Boston, contributed vast sums to finance various reforms. This is not to say, however, that big business in general was favorable to the reform movement. More often than not, reform was resisted by both the laborer and the capitalist. It was essentially a middle-class movement, receiving its greatest support from the reasonably well-to-do farmers, shopkeepers, and professional people of the North and the West.

### FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As of 1830 no state could yet boast a general system of free public education in the modern sense—with full tax support, compulsory attendance, and enforced maintenance of schools—though Massachusetts, as in earlier times, came fairly close to it. A very high proportion of American children had the benefit of the three Rs, but most of them still got their learning from church schools, proprietary institutions, private tutors, or members of their own families.

Then, during the 1830s, a widespread demand for state-supported primary education arose. This demand came from reformers who feared the consequences of allowing every man to vote, including in many cases even the newly arrived immigrant, without making public provision for his literacy at least. The demand came also from workingmen who hoped that book learning would enable their children

to rise in the world. Opposition was forthcoming, however, from taxpayers (especially childless ones) who objected to paying for the education of other people's families, and from Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and other religious groups who already supported their own church schools and did not wish to be taxed for public education besides.

Educational reformers made considerable headway against such opposition in several of the states. The greatest of these leaders was Horace Mann, the first secretary of the Massachusetts board of education, which was established in 1837. He reorganized the state's school system, lengthened the school year (to six months), doubled teachers' salaries, enriched the curriculum, and improved teacher training and teaching methods. Henry Barnard led the way to better schools in Connecticut and Rhode Island. In Pennsylvania a school law was passed in 1835, making state funds available for the education of all children and not merely the children of paupers, as formerly; but only the exertions of Thaddeus Stevens in the legislature saved the law from an early repeal. In New York, after William H. Seward became governor in 1839, the upstate system of school districts supporting their own schools was extended to the metropolis. This step aroused much opposition, since it gave control of some new districts to the local Roman Catholic majorities.

By the 1850s the principle of tax-supported elementary schools was accepted in all the states, and all of them were making at least a start toward putting the principle into practice. Still, there were vast differences in the quantity and quality of public schools from place to place, the poorest performances and the lowest literacy rates being found in the newly settled areas of the West and in the more sparsely populated parts of the South. In the country as a whole, only a small proportion of children of school age were actually going to school—one white child out of every seven in the South and one out of every six elsewhere (1860).

Most teachers were poorly paid and poorly prepared, and many of them were scarcely able to read, write, and cipher. In rural district schools, containing husky youths along with tender tots, what the schoolmaster needed was a strong arm rather than a well-stocked mind. If he could not thrash the most obstreperous of

## Horace Mann on Education [1848]

*Now surely nothing but universal education can counterwork this tendency to the domination of capital and the servility of labor. If one class possesses all the wealth and the education, while the residue of society is ignorant and poor, it matters not by what name the relation between them may be called: the latter, in fact and in truth, will be the servile dependents and subjects to the former. But, if education be equally diffused, it will draw property after it by the strongest of attractions; for such a thing never did happen, and never can happen, as that an intelligent and practical body of men should be permanently poor. Property and labor in different classes are essentially antagonistic; but property and labor in the same class are essentially fraternal.*

his pupils, he could get nowhere with his lessons. Reformers like Mann and Barnard, believing that human nature was essentially good, advocated gentleness and understanding as practiced by progressive educators in Switzerland (notably Johann Pestalozzi). Most teachers—and parents too—subscribed to the old Calvinist doctrine of inborn wickedness: they did not wish to spare the rod.

Under the circumstances the majority of teaching positions continued to be filled by men, even in the elementary schools. Seldom did these men look upon teaching as a career; often they were aspiring lawyers or preachers who worked their way through college by doubling as schoolmasters in vacation periods. Nevertheless, teaching was beginning to be looked upon as a profession, and an increasing number of young women were going into it. With Mann taking the lead, Massachusetts in 1839 established the first American state-supported teacher-training or "normal" school, at Lexington. In 1845 he organized a state association of teachers.

Since so many teachers were poorly prepared, both they and their pupils had to rely heavily upon textbooks. Noah Webster's spellers and grammars continued to be widely used. Supplementing them and rivaling them in popularity were the six graded *Eclectic Readers* (1835–1857) prepared by William Holmes McGuffey, who was an Ohio professor and college president and then for many years a professor at the University of Virginia. The McGuffey readers were filled with moral lessons, patriotic declamations, sentimental verse, and fascinating facts. A favorite recitation piece was the following:

*Woodman, spare that tree;  
Touch not a single bough.  
In youth it sheltered me,  
And I'll protect it now.*

Eventually adopted in thirty-seven states, the McGuffey books gave thousands of schoolchildren a shared background of popular culture and helped to mold the literary tastes of the reading public.

The principle of state support was applied later to secondary than to elementary schools. By 1860 there were 22 tax-supported "free academies" in New York, more than 100 public high schools in Massachusetts, and a total of about 300 such institutions in the nation as a whole. At the same time there were approximately 6,000 private academies. Most of them were open to boys only, a few were coeducational, and a growing number were female seminaries.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

While the private academies were multiplying, so were the private colleges, though at a slower rate, about eighty being founded between 1830 and 1850. Almost all of these were denominational colleges, with close church connections, and their chief though not their only purpose was to prepare a learned clergy. These institutions became too numerous for their own good. Their enrollments were small, in many cases fewer than 100 in the 1850s (even Harvard and Yale had only 400 or 500 students apiece, though the College of William and Mary had nearly 1,000). Generally endowments were

scanty, facilities poor, salaries low, and professors unscholarly, though self-sacrificing and sincere.

None of these institutions admitted women until, in 1837, Oberlin accepted four girls as regular students and thus became the first co-educational college. Some outsiders feared that coeducation was a rash experiment approximating free love, but the Oberlin authorities were confident that "the mutual influence of the sexes upon each other is decidedly happy in the cultivation of both mind & manners." Only a few other institutions copied Oberlin's example before the Civil War. Some of the young ladies' seminaries— notably Mount Holyoke, which the most famous of all women educators, Mary Lyon, founded in Massachusetts in 1837—eventually became full-fledged women's colleges.

The idea of state support for higher education had to contend against the prevailing concept of private, denominational control. Besides the older states with public universities (Vermont, North Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Virginia) many of the newer states of the Northwest and Southwest committed themselves to the support of higher learning. State universities were established in Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, Missouri, Mississippi, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Louisiana before the Civil War. None of these, whether old or new, was a true university in the European sense of an institution devoted to high-level, graduate training.

The standard curriculum, whether in the private college or the state university, still emphasized the old-fashioned liberal arts. A young man who desired training for a professional career (other than the ministry) had few institutions to choose from. He could study engineering at the United States Military Academy, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (1824), or at Yale or Harvard, which set up engineering schools in 1846 and 1847. He could study law or medicine at one of several institutions, but no American medical school compared with the best ones abroad. In most cases, as in earlier times, he apprenticed himself to a practicing physician, learned engineering on the job (the Erie Canal was a most productive "school" for engineers), or "read law" in the office of some successful lawyer.

Adult education was furthered by the founding of numerous libraries, study clubs,

and self-improvement societies of various kinds. Noteworthy was the Lyceum, which was started by Josiah Holbrook in Massachusetts (1826) and spread rapidly throughout the North. "The first step to form a Lyceum," Holbrook explained, "is for a few neighbors or citizens to agree to hold meetings for their mutual improvement." Next, they could acquire books, scientific apparatus, specimens of rocks and plants, and the like. Then they could conduct experiments, carry on discussions among themselves, and sponsor public lectures. The sponsorship of lectures soon became their principal activity. Though the Lyceum many thousands of Americans were able to hear scientists like Agassiz, foreign authors like Dickens, exemplars of self-culture like the "learned Blacksmith" Elihu Burritt, popular philosophers like Emerson, and social reformers like the abolitionist Garrison or the repentant drunkard John B. Gough.

## MODEL COMMUNITIES

While many reformers hoped to make possible a better life by creating opportunities through education or by eliminating specific social evils, some of the more advanced thinkers aspired to start afresh and remake society by founding ideal, cooperative communities. America still seemed a spacious and unencumbered country where models of a perfect society could be set up with a good chance to succeed. Presumably success would lead to imitation, until communities free of crime, poverty, and other evils would cover the land. A number of religious groups, notably the Shakers, practiced a kind of socialism as a means of realizing what they considered a truly Christian life. But the impetus to communitarianism as a way of perfecting earthly society came chiefly from nonreligious, rationalistic thinkers.

Among the communitarian philosophers, three of the most influential were Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, and John Humphrey Noyes. Owen, famous for his humanitarian policies as owner of prosperous textile mills in Scotland, reached the conclusion that faulty environment was to blame for human failings, and hence that poverty and crime would not appear in a rationally planned society. In 1825 he put his principles into practice at New Harmony, on the banks of the Wabash in Indiana.





**The Oneida Community**  
*Members of the Oneida Community, in upstate New York, believed in "complex marriage" according to which all the men were considered as married to all the women. Women enjoyed the same rights as men, and the whole community took care of the children. The members looked upon all kinds of work as honorable. Here, on the lawn at Oneida, some of them are taking part in a "working bee," in which (like many other Americans of the time) they combined labor with conversation and merrymaking. (Library of Congress)*

Within a few years New Harmony failed as an economic enterprise, though in other respects it was a success. Fourier, a mere commercial employee in France, never visited the United States. His theories of cooperative living, however, influenced many Americans through the writings of Albert Brisbane, whose *Social Destiny of Man* (1840) explained the principles of Fourierism with its self-sufficient associations, or "phalanxes." One or more of these phalanxes was organized in every Northern state, the most famous of them being Brook Farm, a community of intellectuals including Hawthorne, near Boston. Noyes, a native Vermonter and a former Yale divinity student, founded the most bizarre and most enduring of all the

utopian colonies, the Oneida Community in upstate New York (1848), where his followers carried out his unorthodox sexual theories, old men mating with young women and vice versa, all changing partners at his direction, supposedly in the interest of scientific breeding. Needless to say, none of these experiments set a pattern for American life.

#### REMEDYING SOCIAL ILLS

Less thoroughgoing reforms, however, did much to alleviate the ills of society as it actually was. No evil was more glaring than the treatment of social offenders and unfortunates.

Criminals of all kinds, debtors unable to pay their debts, senile paupers, and the mentally ill were crowded indiscriminately into prisons and jails which in many cases were literally holes, one jail in Connecticut being an abandoned mine shaft.

From the 1820s on, the states one by one abolished imprisonment for debt, and some of them greatly improved their handling of the criminal and the insane. New York, with the erection of its new prison at Auburn (1821), introduced a system of solitary confinement by night and group work with absolute silence by day; Pennsylvania tried solitary confinement for both day and night. Though both of these systems now seem harsh, they were then hailed as progressive steps, since they gave each prisoner an opportunity to meditate upon his wrongdoing and also checked the tendency for old convicts to corrupt the young. Public hangings, supposedly a deterrent to crime, used to attract spectators by the thousands, including thieves and pickpockets busily plying their trade. In the 1830s several states began to hold executions within the privacy of prison walls, and a few states did away with capital punishment entirely. While a few mental hospitals already existed, the insane (unless cared for at home) generally were kept in jail and treated brutally. The Boston schoolmistress, Dorothea Dix, shocked by her chance visit to the Cambridge jail (1841), devoted her life to securing the establishment of insane asylums in Massachusetts and other states.

In looking for causes of insanity, pauperism, and crime, many reformers concluded that these evils could be traced largely to strong drink. Americans of earlier generations had been an alcoholically convivial people, with a remarkable per capita consumption of whiskey, hard cider, and rum. The Puritans had been hard drinkers and many respectable preachers continued to resort to stimulants. Few Americans supposed that a birth, a wedding, or a funeral could be properly observed without plenty of liquor—the story is told of drunken pallbearers who lost their way to the grave. From colonial times on, however, a few men like Cotton Mather and Dr. Benjamin Rush had spoken out against intemperance.

In the early 1800s an organized temperance movement began with the formation of local societies in New England, and in 1826 the

American Society for the Promotion of Temperance appeared as a coordinating agency for the various groups. The movement gained in sensationalism when six reformed drunkards of Baltimore organized the Washington Temperance Society in 1840 and began to draw crowds to hear their intriguing confessions. As the temperance forces grew and spread over the country, the crusaders diverged, some advocating total abstinence and others seeing no harm in wine or beer; some favoring prohibition laws and others relying on the individual conscience. Massachusetts and other states experimented with legislation for local option, allowing communities to regulate or prohibit liquor sales, and Maine passed a statewide prohibition law in 1851. Prohibitionists in a few other states gained similar victories, but the laws were unpopular and soon were repealed except in Maine.

To some it seemed that not only alcoholic beverages but also tobacco, coffee, and unnatural foods hindered the full realization of man's perfectionist possibilities. A leading health faddist, Dr. Sylvester Graham, believed that one way to social happiness was through the eating of coarse, whole-wheat bread (the "Graham cracker" is a faint reminder of him). Other health reformers relied on hydropathy with its regimen of bathing and water drinking; spas like the Hot Springs in Virginia became fashionable places for taking the "water cure." Orson Fowler, the foremost exponent of phrenology (a "science" based on the notion that character and personality are revealed in the contour of the cranium), expected to bring about a "renovating of mankind" through the self-understanding that was supposed to result from the examination of bumps on the head. This science became so popular that practically everyone turned into an amateur phrenologist.

Recalling the Napoleonic Wars and the War of 1812, many reformers agreed with the Quakers that one of the worst ills of the world was war. By 1819 more than a dozen local peace societies had sprung up in various parts of the United States, and in 1828 the Maine merchant William Ladd undertook to coordinate the movement by founding the American Peace Society with headquarters in New York. Later (1840) Ladd devised a peace plan embracing a Congress of Nations and a Court of Nations whose decisions were to be enforced

by public opinion rather than economic or military sanctions. Meanwhile the pacifists disagreed, some approving defensive but not offensive wars, others taking a pledge of complete nonresistance. To most of the peace workers in New England, the Mexican War (1846-1848) seemed an act of proslavery aggression on the part of the United States and they took their stand against it. Henry David Thoreau refusing

to pay taxes for its support and James Russell Lowell writing in the *Bigelow Papers* "Er fer war I call it murder — there you hev it plain an' flat." But the Civil War put the pacifists in a dilemma at least momentarily since most of them were also abolitionists. Finally the anti-slavery cause took precedence over the anti-war cause as it already had taken precedence over the rest of the reform crusades.

### The Drunkard's Progress

From the first casual glass the young man rises step by step to the summit of drunken jollification and then declines to desperation and suicide while his wife and child mourn. This lithograph was published in 1846 by Nathaniel Currier who later joined with James M. Ives to form the most famous American firm of lithographers. Currier and Ives turned out thousands of color prints of artwork reflecting manners, movements, and events in the days before photographs could be accurately reproduced by means of halftone engravings. (Library of Congress)



THE DRUNKARD'S PROGRESS.  
FROM A LITHOGRAPH BY NATHANIEL CURRIER.

### IMPROVING WOMAN'S LOT

Whatever the social handicaps that beset man as man, those that a woman had to face in early nineteenth-century America were considerably worse. Legally she remained an inferior. According to both common and statute law, a husband still had almost absolute authority over the person and property of his wife: what was his was his, and what was hers was his also. In case of divorce he was far more likely than she to get custody of the children. Though women worked hard in household and mill,

they could not look forward to careers in medicine, the ministry, politics, or law. By custom they were forbidden to speak in public to a mixed audience, lest they "unsex" themselves and lose their feminine charm. As long as women kept their expected place, men in America generally treated them with great deference — with much greater deference, foreign travelers noted, than men in Europe did.

Women, Dorothea Dix among them, took an active and often a leading part in the various reform movements, but most of the male reformers tried to confine the women to a subor-



A Social Reformer  
Dorothea Dix (1802–1887)  
was born in Maine and  
brought up in  
Massachusetts. She  
taught school and wrote  
books for children before  
starting her campaign to  
establish public hospitals  
for the mentally ill (and  
also to make prisons less  
inhumane). Until she  
was eighty she continued  
to travel the United  
States and Europe in  
furtherance of this cause  
(Library of Congress)

# The Course of American Art

## II. THE NEW REPUBLIC: The Search for an American Style



*Plate 1: STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS (Photo by Sandak)*

The period immediately after the Revolution witnessed the rejection of many of the old cultural ties to England and the desire on the part of many American artists and architects to create a style expressive of the ideals and achievements of the new republic. Under the influence of Thomas Jefferson, ancient Roman architecture—monumental in size and symbolic of the concepts of justice and liberty connoted by Roman republican government—became a model for government buildings from the city to the federal level. His own design for the state capitol building of Virginia, 1789, was inspired by a Roman temple.

Not all architects, however, were ready to turn their backs on their English heritage. Charles Bulfinch was influenced by current English practice in his design for the Massachusetts State House (Plate 1). The large red brick structure, with its colonnaded façade and golden dome, was designed by

Bulfinch after a trip to Europe in 1785. The arcade below the columns is modeled after a house in London, and the arched windows on the second story are derived from traditional English pattern books.

The conflict between those like Jefferson who advocated a new national style based on classical precedents, and those like Bulfinch who remained under the influence of the former mother country, was also seen in the development of American painting. Since the middle of the eighteenth century colonial artists had gone to England to study their craft. Such painters as Benjamin West, John Singleton Copley, and Charles Willson Peale had traveled to London in search of a more refined technique. With the coming of independence, artists like Ralph Earle and Thomas Sully continued to make the pilgrimage. But as the nineteenth century began, a new style of painting, featuring a

**Plate 2** John Vanderlyn,  
**MARIUS AMID THE RUINS OF**  
**CARTHAGE** (*The Fine Arts*  
*Museums of San Francisco,*  
*Photo by Sandak*)



revival of classical characteristics, began to gain prominence in Europe, and Paris, the center for the study of neoclassicism, attracted a number of American artists. The first American to study under the founder of neoclassicism, Jacques Louis David, was John Vanderlyn. Vanderlyn's "Marius amid the Ruins of Carthage" (Plate 2), painted in 1807, was shown at the Paris Salon and was awarded a gold medal by the Emperor Napoleon. The subject, taken from Roman history, was found to have the proper didactic and allegorical qualities to meet the strict requirements of the Parisian artistic establishment; and the painting showed a masterful treatment of the careful drawing, clear color, and firm modeling which characterized the neoclassical style.

For all of Vanderlyn's European triumphs, his severe neoclassic style met with only

limited success on his return to America. In architecture, however, the classical revival did dominate the scene for domestic and public buildings during the first half of the nineteenth century. By 1820 Jefferson's architectural style of republican Rome had given way to more severe Greek forms. The new generation of architects who practiced in the Greek revival style relied for inspiration on such English publications as Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*, which contained a series of black-and-white engravings illustrating individual buildings. One of the principal architects of the style was William Strickland, who based his most important commissions on Greek precedent. Strickland's Second Bank of the United States, 1819 (see page 275), is taken directly from an engraving illustrating the Parthenon in Stuart and Revett's book. The monumental

facade with porticos of Doric columns became a symbol of strength and stability, well suited to banks and governmental buildings.

In sculpture, the enthusiasm for the Greco-Roman style reached its height with the commission in 1832 for a monumental statue of George Washington to be placed in the rotunda of the United States Capitol. Horatio Greenough's conception (*Plate 3*) was that of a huge seated figure, nude to the waist and gesturing like the Olympian Zeus. Carved in Rome, the twenty-ton marble statue was brought to America for its installation in the Capitol. The monument was found to be too heavy for the foundation of its indoor setting, so it was moved outdoors to a makeshift shelter on the Mall, and fifty years later moved again to its present home, the Smithsonian Institution. The public questioned the "nakedness" of their beloved first President, but the ideals of classicism, with

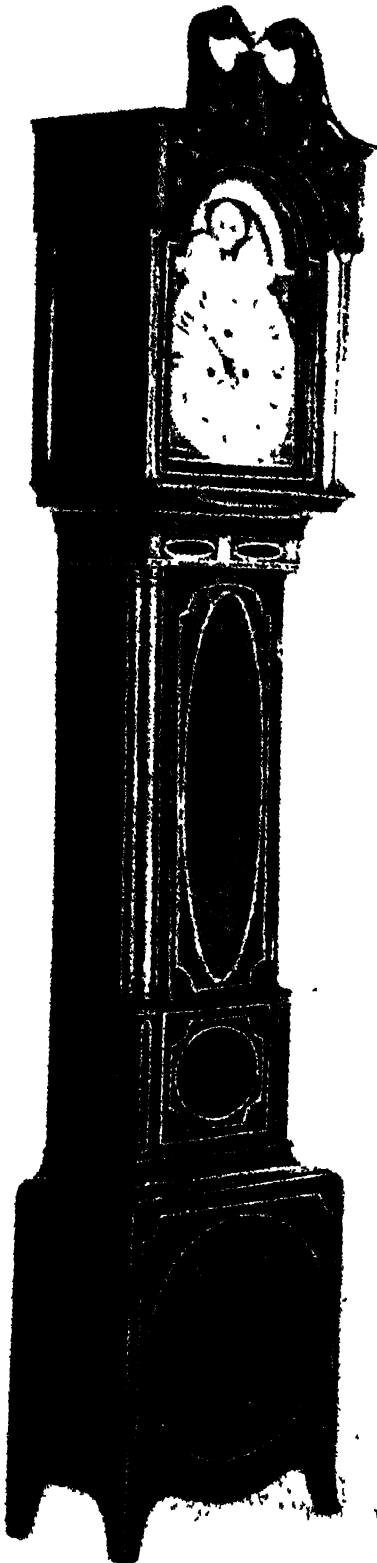
its basic principles of restraint, precision, and self-containment were popularly accepted and thought to be consistent with the growing spirit of self-confidence in the new nation.

In most major cities, from Boston to Baltimore, furniture making continued after the Revolution on the highest levels of skill and refinement. Inspiration was still derived largely from European sources, particularly pattern books of the English designers Hepplewhite and Sheraton. By the turn of the century, American craftsmen such as Duncan Phyfe and John Seymour had evolved from the imported models a uniquely American Federal style, and had added patriotic motifs such as eagles to traditional decorative devices. An elegant mahogany "Tall Clock" (*Plate 4*), made in 1818, features delicate inlays of satinwood and, in the upper section above the clock face, twenty inlaid stars representing the number of states in the



*Plate 3* Horatio Greenough,  
GEORGE WASHINGTON (*Courtesy of  
National Collection of Fine Arts,  
Smithsonian Institution*)

**Plate 4. ANONYMOUS, TALL CLOCK**  
(Courtesy, The Henry Francis  
du Pont Winterthur Museum)



Union at the time the clock was made

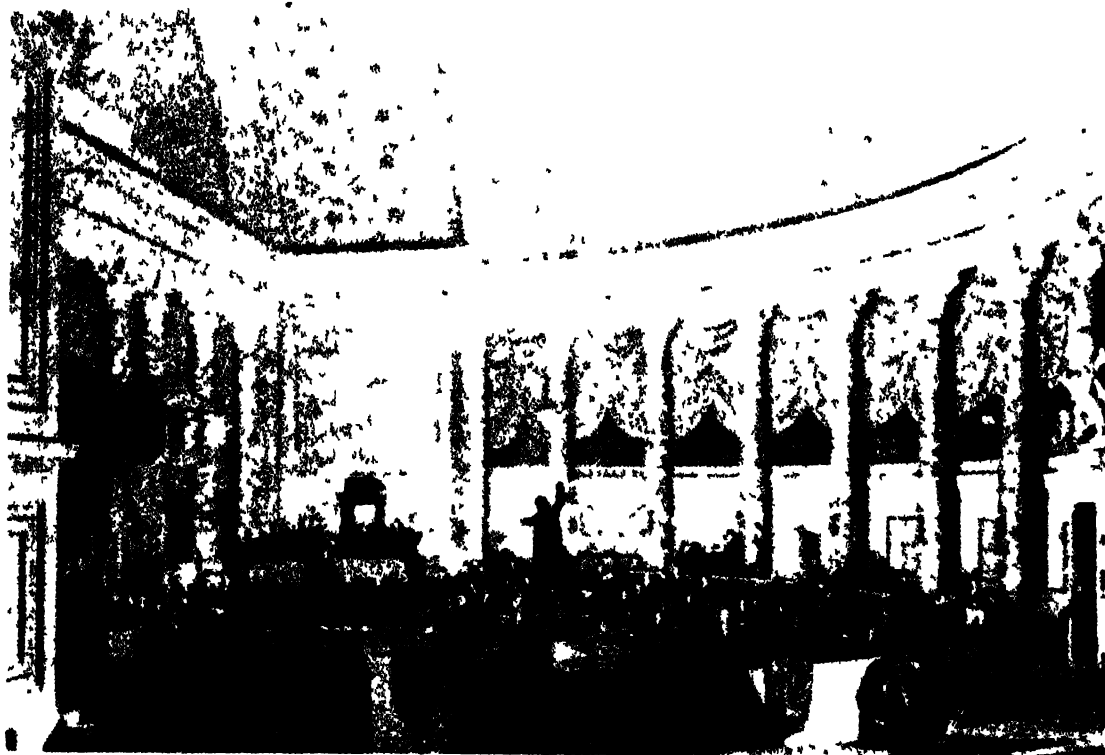
Painting too offered American artists an opportunity to express a sense of confidence in the American experiment. Samuel F. B. Morse (later to be the inventor of the telegraph), whose early training had been in Italy, painted a large canvas depicting a scene in the Old House of Representatives (now Statuary Hall) (Plate 5). Completed in 1822, the painting captures a quiet and reflective moment when the chandelier has been lowered for the lighting of the lamps. A soft reddish glow pervades the majestic chamber with light flickering off the marble columns and coffered ceiling. Morse has successfully combined the grandiose proportions of the legislative hall with intimate details of the people within it.

As mid-century approached, American taste moved away from the severe classicism which had dominated the first six decades of independence, toward a romantic eclecticism – a kind of artistic escapism characterized by the borrowing of historical and exotic styles. In all the arts the tradition of patriotic sentiment persisted, but it was no longer expressed exclusively in classical forms. During this period landscape painting came of age in America. The formation of the first native American school of painting was rooted in a new awareness on the artists' part of the unlimited continent that stretched out before them. Working primarily in the mountains of New York and New England, these painters – whom later critics dubbed the "Hudson River School" – glorified the natural environment, making the wilderness a symbol of national pride.

The leader of the school was Thomas Cole, born in England but brought to America as a small child. His 1840 painting entitled "The Architect's Dream" (Plate 6) was, like many of his works, commissioned by a wealthy businessman. Although the subject of the "Dream" differs from Cole's usual American landscape panoramas, the artist's intention was, as always, symbolic and romantic. For the painting includes a vast vocabulary of architectural styles ranging from Egyptian to Gothic, which would serve American eclectic taste in architecture for the remainder of the century.

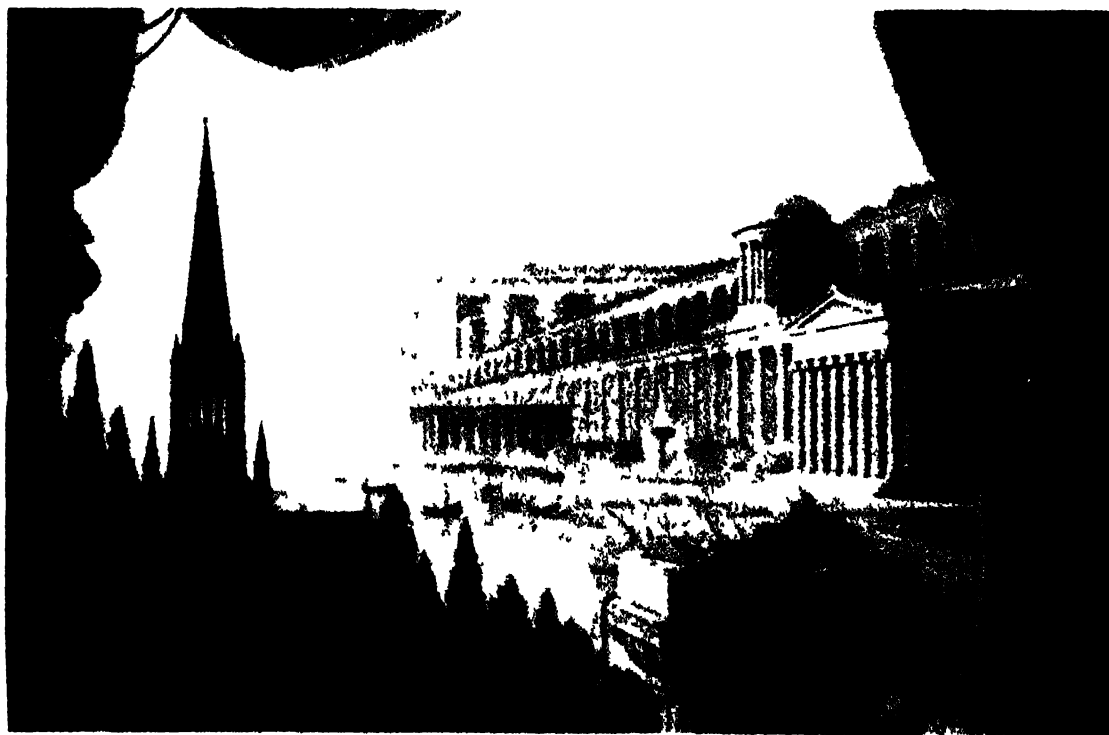
Another painter associated with the Hudson River School was Asher B. Durand. Beginning his career as an engraver, Durand perfected a landscape style of meticulous detail and precision. In his "Kindred Spirits" (Plate 7),





*Plate 5 Samuel F B Morse, THE OLD HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (In the Collection of the Carcoran Gallery of Art)*

*Plate 6 Thomas Cole, THE ARCHITECT'S DREAM (The Toledo Museum of Art, Gift of Florence Scott Libbey)*





**Plate 7** Asher B. Durand, **KINDRED SPIRITS** (*Collection of The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*)

which he painted in 1849<sup>7</sup> as a memorial to Thomas Cole, Durand sees in the landscape both the wildness and the grandeur of nature. The two figures represent Cole and the poet William Cullen Bryant. The picturesque woodland and the mood of sentimental reverence reflect the artist's romantic tendencies.

Another landscape painted in the 1840s also evoked a mood of contemplation, but this time the setting was not the Hudson River valley but the Missouri River frontier. In George Caleb Bingham's "Fur Traders Descending the Missouri," ca. 1845 (*Plate 8*), the artist captures the quiet of early morning, as the two boatmen glide through the mist on the mirror-like surface of the river. Bingham communicates the quality of frontier life without resorting to anecdote or sentimentality.

The change from portraiture to landscapes as the most popular form of American painting was paralleled by an equally

dramatic change in interior design and furnishings. Classical motifs, which had dominated the first half of the century, gave way to the exuberant forms of Rococo curvilinear rhythms and richly polished surfaces. An excellent example of a Rococo interior is the parlor of the Colonel Robert J. Milligan House from Saratoga, New York, 1853 (*Plate 9*), which is now installed in the Brooklyn Museum. Although some classical elements such as pilasters and moldings still persist, the overall appearance of the room is one of Rococo opulence. The elaborately carved marble mantelpiece and the richly upholstered chairs contribute to the lush setting.

In architecture, as in the other arts and crafts, the influence of Greece and Rome faded in the romantic wave that swept across the country. The dream of the architect in Cole's painting was fulfilled as Gothic churches, Renaissance villas, and Egyptian

*Plate 8* George Caleb Bingham **FUR TRADERS DESCENDING THE MISSOURI** (*The Metropolitan Museum of Art Morris K. Jesup Fund 1933*)





*Plate 9: Anonymous, MILLIGAN HOUSE: PARLOR (The Brooklyn Museum)*

gateways replaced classical forms. The reliance on pattern books continued, but many were now published in America. As the taste for romantic styles increased, even examples of Near Eastern designs were included in publications. In Samuel Sloan's *The Model Architect*, 1852, plate 63 represented an "Oriental Villa." This design was chosen by a wealthy southern planter, and under Sloan's direction "Longwood" (Plate 10), with its Moorish arches, onion-shaped dome, and intricate decoration began to be built near the shores of the Mississippi River in 1860. Unfortunately the outbreak of the Civil War prevented completion of this intriguing example of eclectic design, and it remains to this day unfinished.



*Plate 10: Samuel Sloan, LONGWOOD (The Mississippi Department of Archives and History)*

## Equal Rights for Women [1848]

After declaring that "all men and women are created equal" and listing the "injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman," the Seneca Falls women's rights convention adopted a series of resolutions for constructive action, among them the following

*Resolved, That the same amount of virtue, delicacy, and refinement of behavior that is required of woman in the social state, should also be required of man, and the same transgressions should be visited with equal severity on both man and woman*

*Resolved, That the objection of indelicacy and impropriety, which is so often brought against women when she addresses a public audience, comes with a very ill grace from those who encourage, by their attendance, her appearance on the stage, in the concert, or in feats of the circus.*

*Resolved, That it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise*

*Resolved, That the equality of human rights results necessarily from the fact of the identity of the race in capabilities and responsibilities.*

*Resolved That the speedy success of our cause depends upon the zealous and untiring efforts of both men and women, for the overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit, and for the securing to women an equal participation in the various trades, professions, and commerce.*

dinate role, though some husbands gave them every encouragement, a few even going so far as to omit the word "obey" from the wedding ceremony. When, in 1840, a world antislavery convention met in London, the men in charge refused to allow women delegates to participate. One of the rejected American delegates was Lucretia Mott, the happily married wife of a Massachusetts sea captain and eventually the mother of six children. Another was Elizabeth Cady Stanton, an abolitionist's wife, who had set out to prove herself the equal of any man after her father, on the death of his only son, had said to her. "Oh, my daughter, I wish you were a boy." The rebuff in London helped to convince Mrs. Mott and Mrs. Stanton that their first duty, as reformers, was to raise the status of women. Finally they called a women's rights convention, which met in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. This convention adopted resolutions (patterned on the Declaration of Independence) to the effect that all men and women are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights.

While the feminists failed to obtain the right to vote or hold office, they made noticeable gains before the Civil War. As early as

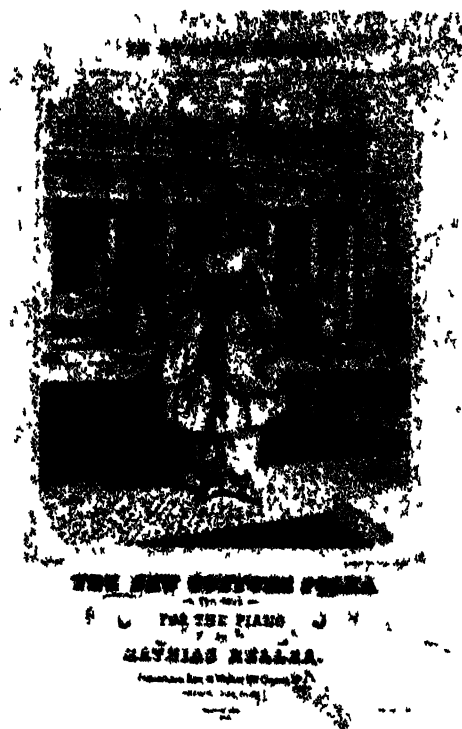
1839, Mississippi had recognized the right of married women to control their own property, and during the next two decades several other states did the same. Meanwhile a number of women from well-to-do and well-educated families, in addition to Mrs. Mott and Mrs. Stanton, broke the barriers that had kept women from professional and public careers. For example, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, born in England gained acceptance and fame as a physician. Her sister-in-law Antoinette Brown Blackwell became the first ordained woman minister (Congregational and Unitarian) in the United States. Another sister-in-law, Lucy Stone, who was determined to "call no man master," kept her maiden name with her husband's approval. A graduate of Oberlin College, where she was not allowed to take part in public speaking, she rose to be one of the country's most popular and successful lecturers. Emma Willard, founder of the Troy Female Seminary (1821), and Catharine Beecher, founder of the Hartford Female Seminary (1823), made great contributions to progressive education, especially for girls.

For a time, in the 1850s, many of the feminists adopted a distinctive style of dress, a skirt

### The Bloomer Costume

*An enterprising Philadelphia music publisher, taking advantage of a timely topic, brought out "The New Costume Polka" and dedicated it to Mrs "Lydia" (it should have been "Amelia") Bloomer. The cover of the sheet music was adorned with this picture of a demure young lady wearing the clothes that in the 1850s Mrs. Bloomer recommended as a means of giving women greater freedom. The clothes came to be known as "bloomers."*  
(Library of Congress)

and pantalettes combination that allowed freedom of movement without loss of modesty. This outfit, introduced by the famous actress Fanny Kemble, came to be called the "bloomer" costume after one of its advocates, Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, a postmistress and newspaper editor in upstate New York. It provoked so much controversy that Mrs. Bloomer and other women's rights leaders concluded it was distracting attention from their more important aims and decided to give it up.



## The Antislavery Crusade

Mid-nineteenth-century Americans would have had some justification for boasting of their democratic society if they could have ignored the Negro—the freeman as well as the slave. But they could not ignore him. Reformers black and white would not let them.

### THE NEGRO IN THE NORTH

In the 1850s there were more than 4 million black Americans, of whom about 95 percent were confined to the South. That left nearly a quarter of a million of them living in the North. These people were concentrated mainly in the cities, about 22,000 in Philadelphia and about 12,000 in New York. Many were fugitives from slavery.

In some respects the free Negroes of the North were little if any better off than the free Negroes or even the slaves of the South. An English traveler, who was acquainted with the

treatment of the black man in both sections reported in 1854 that he was "utterly at a loss to imagine the source of that prejudice which subsists against him in the Northern states, a prejudice unknown in the South, where the relations between the African and the European [white American] are so much more intimate." This confirmed an earlier observation of Tocqueville's: "the prejudice which repels the Negroes seems to increase in proportion as they are emancipated."

Certainly the Northern Negro faced severe handicaps in even managing to exist. He had little or no political influence; he could vote only in New England (not including Connecticut), and in New York only if he owned a certain amount of property, which was not required of white voters. In most places he was excluded from the public schools that whites attended. He faced the constant danger of being attacked by white mobs or kidnapped by slave dealers and sold, or resold, into slavery.

Usually he had no choice but to take a low-paying job as a domestic servant or unskilled laborer. Seafaring offered him one of his best opportunities; in the 1850s, when the American merchant marine was at its height, nearly half of the sailors in it were blacks. The typical city Negro lived in squalor in a segregated neighborhood. He was eleven times as likely as a white man to be jailed on a charge of theft, robbery, or other crime.

Despite the almost hopeless odds, a number of Northern Negroes managed to succeed in business or the professions. James Forten, for example, started out as an errand boy around the Philadelphia docks, became a sailmaker, and accumulated a small fortune. The Negroes of New York City, as early as 1837, owned \$1.4 million worth of taxable real estate and had \$600,000 on deposit in savings banks. But what most distinguished the free Negroes of the North from those of the South (some of whom also acquired property) was the opportunity to speak out, to protest the plight of black people both free and slave, and to try and do something about it.

In the early 1800s a Massachusetts free Negro, Paul Cuffe, tried to begin a back-to-Africa movement so as to give his people a new life in their ancestral homeland. Cuffe had spent \$4,000 on the project, without success, when he died in 1817. That same year a group of prominent white Virginians organized the American Colonization Society to "colonize" freed slaves in Africa. Some Northern Negroes feared this was a scheme to get rid of them, and James Forten called a mass meeting of Philadelphia blacks to object to it. Many well-meaning Northern whites favored it as a step toward emancipation; they thought it would encourage slaveowners to free at least some of their slaves. The American Colonization Society received private contributions and appropriations from Congress and the Virginia and Maryland legislatures to carry on the work. Though shipping out of the country fewer Negroes in a decade than were being born in it each month, the society succeeded in founding and governing on the west coast of Africa the colony of Liberia, which it converted into an independent black republic in 1846.

Meanwhile, in Massachusetts, a new note of black militancy had been struck. David Walker, born free in North Carolina, made his

living by selling second-hand clothes in Boston. There, in 1829, he published a pamphlet entitled *Walker's Appeal . . . to the Colored Citizens*. In it he declared: "America is more our country than it is the whites"—we have enriched it with our *blood and tears*." He warned: "The whites want slaves, and want us for their slaves, but some of them will curse the day they ever saw us." He ridiculed the "Christian" pretensions of the slaveholders and urged slaves to cut their masters' throats. "Kill, or be killed!"

A number of other black critics of slavery, most of them less bitterly outspoken than Walker, appeared in the North. The greatest of all—and one of the most electrifying orators of his time, black or white—was Frederick Douglass. Born a slave in Maryland, Douglass ran off to

#### Black Leader

*The most prominent American Negro of the pre-Civil War era, and indeed of the nineteenth century, was Frederick Douglass. He was born in Maryland, of an unknown white father and a slave mother. In 1838 he escaped from slavery and went to the Northeast. There he shortly became a leader in the abolitionist movement, appearing on the lecture platform, editing a newspaper, the North Star, and publishing his autobiography, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (1845). Douglass demanded not only emancipation for his race but also social and economic equality (United Press International)*



## **The Liberator: First Issue [1831]**

William Lloyd Garrison made clear his fiery spirit and his uncompromising aim in the very first number of his abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*. He told his readers.

*I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation. No! No! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen;—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD.*

Massachusetts in 1838, made a name for himself as an antislavery leader, and lectured for two years in England, where he was lionized. (More than a dozen other black abolitionists also visited the British Isles and made a strong impression there.) After returning to the United States in 1847, Douglass purchased his freedom from his Maryland owner and founded an antislavery newspaper, the *North Star*, in Rochester, New York.

As early as 1830, black abolitionists had held their first national convention. They were ready to cooperate with white reformers when some of these launched an aggressive antislavery movement.

## **THE WHITE ABOLITIONISTS**

During the 1820s the most active white crusader against slavery was the New Jersey Quaker Benjamin Lundy, who published the leading antislavery newspaper of the time, the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, in Baltimore. Lundy used moderate language and advocated a mild and gradual program.

In 1831 his helper, the young Massachusetts-born printer William Lloyd Garrison, sounded a much more strident note when he presented the first issue of his own weekly, *The Liberator*, in Boston. From the outset Garrison condemned the thought of gradual, compensated emancipation and demanded immediate abolition, without reimbursement for slaveholders. He denounced the American Colonization Society as no emancipationist agency

but the reverse, a group whose real aim was to strengthen slavery by ridding the country of Negroes already free. He got support from free Negroes, who bought most of the subscriptions to *The Liberator*. Despite his strong language, he was no advocate of slave rebellions, and he criticized *Walker's Appeal* as a "most injudicious publication."

Under the leadership of Garrison the New England Antislavery Society was founded in 1832 and the American Antislavery Society the following year. But he shocked many friends of freedom, including Frederick Douglass, by the extremes to which he went. He opposed the government, characterizing the Constitution as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell," and he opposed the churches on the grounds that they were bulwarks of slavery. In 1840 he split the American Antislavery Society by insisting upon the right of women to participate fully in its activities, even to speak before audiences that included men as well as women.

By that time there were in existence nearly 2,000 local societies with a total of almost 200,000 members. These societies remained alive, active, and growing after the disruption of the national organization.

Another outstanding leader, busy in New York and the Northwest, was Theodore Weld. Converted to reform by Charles G. Finney's preaching, Weld worked within the churches, especially the Presbyterian and Congregational. He married Angelina Grimké, a South Carolina planter's daughter who, with a sister, had turned against slavery. With the aid of his wife, Weld compiled an overwhelming factual indict-



ment of the institution in the book *American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* (1839).

But the most powerful of all abolitionist propaganda was a work of fiction, Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. This first appeared as a serial in an antislavery weekly (1851–1852). It was then published as a book, which sold more than 300,000 copies in the year of its publication and was later reissued again and again, to become one of the most remarkable best sellers in American publishing history. Dramatized in various versions, and presented by countless theatrical companies throughout the North, the story brought its emotional message to many thousands besides those who read it. Mrs. Stowe belonged to a famous New England ministerial family (her father and seven brothers were preachers). While living in Cincinnati she had made several excursions into Kentucky to view slavery and plantation life. In her novel she intended no personal attack upon Southern whites, and she made the worst of her villains a New England native, Simon Legree. Her aim was to show the brutalizing effect that slavery had upon all who were connected with it.

Through *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and other antislavery writings and speeches, a great many Northerners who never joined an abolitionist society came to disapprove strongly of slavery. Hence it is hard to say how many antislavery people there were at any given time, especially since "antislavery" was a term broad enough to include all kinds and degrees of opposition.

## THE CAMPAIGN FOR LIBERATION

Most of the active members of organized societies were "abolitionists" in the sense that they favored immediate abolition. But this did not mean precisely what it seemed to mean. The abolitionists aimed at what they called "immediate abolition gradually accomplished." That is, they hoped to bring about a sudden and not a gradual end to slavery, but they did not expect to achieve this for some time. At first, they counted on "moral suasion": they were going to appeal to the conscience of the slaveholder and convince him that slaveholding was a sin. Later they turned more and more to political action, seeking to induce the Northern states

and the federal government to aid the cause where possible. They helped runaway slaves find refuge in the North or in Canada, though in doing so they did not set up any such highly organized system as the term "Underground Railroad" implies. After the Supreme Court (in *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*, 1842) held that the states need not aid in enforcing the federal fugitive slave law of 1793, abolitionists secured the passage of "personal liberty laws" in several of the Northern states. These laws forbade state officials to assist in the capture and return of runaways. Above all, the antislavery societies petitioned Congress to abolish slavery in places where the federal government had jurisdiction—in the territories and the District of Columbia—and to prohibit the interstate slave trade. Only a very few of the abolitionists supposed that Congress constitutionally could interfere with a "domestic" institution like slavery within the Southern states themselves.

While the abolitionists engaged in pressure politics, they never formed a political party with an abolition platform. In 1840 the Liberty party was launched, with the Kentucky antislavery leader James G. Birney as its presidential candidate, but this party and its successors did not campaign for outright abolition: they stood for "free soil," that is, for keeping slavery out of the territories. Some free-soilers were friends of the slave; others were Negrophobes who cared nothing about slavery but desired to make the West a white man's country. Garrison said free-soil-ism was really "white-man-ism."

The real friends of the Negro were quite aware that, to be consistent, they would have to help the free as well as the enslaved, since so-called freedom was "but an empty name—but the debasing mockery of true freedom." Garrison assured his "free colored brethren" that the attainment of equal rights for them was "a leading object." He and other abolitionists did try to open new opportunities for them. They had little success in appealing to employers to hire additional Negroes and give them training as apprentices. But the reformers made other rather modest gains. They established schools for Negroes (by 1837 there were a hundred young white women teaching black children in Ohio) and even colleges (Wilberforce in Ohio, Avery in Pennsylvania). They opened Oberlin College to black students. They brought about the desegregation of all Massachusetts public

schools in 1855, six years after Charles Sumner had argued in a Boston lawsuit (as opponents of segregation elsewhere were to do a century later) that, no matter how good the facilities provided for Negro pupils, "the separate school is not an equivalent." The reformers also secured the repeal of Massachusetts and Ohio laws requiring separate Negro cars on railroads.

The abolitionists might have accomplished more reforms in the North if it had not been for the widespread anti-Negro if not pro-slavery feeling there. Prejudice was reinforced by the desire of many Northern businessmen to keep on good terms with Southern customers or suppliers, and by the fear on the part of wage-earning Northern whites that Negroes, if freed and given equal opportunities, would be dangerous competitors for jobs. The antislavery movement provoked much hostility in the

North, especially during the early years. When Prudence Crandall undertook to admit Negro girls to her private school in Connecticut, local citizens had her arrested and threw filth into her well, forcing her to close the school. A mob burned the Philadelphia abolitionists' "temple of liberty" and started a bloody race riot (1834). Another mob seized Garrison on the streets of Boston and threatened to hang him, and a member of still another group shot and killed the antislavery editor Elijah Lovejoy in Alton, Illinois (1837). Throughout the North antislavery lecturers, risking their health if not their lives, time and again were attacked with rotten eggs or stones.

In the South the reaction was far stronger, and if no abolitionists were killed there, it was only because (from the 1830s on) very few of them dared even venture into that part of the country.

## The Southern Way of Life

Of the three great sections of the country, the South was the one that possessed the highest degree of cultural unity, the one that presented the strongest appearance of solidarity to the outside world. The South (defined as the area of the slave states) was an entity even though within its vast expanse it exhibited immense differences in climate, soil, and people—more perhaps than were to be found in any other region.

### ELEMENTS OF SOUTHERNISM

The qualities that gave the South its distinctive flavor are not easy to define. Generally, the climate is warm and mild; on the lower Gulf coast, it is subtropical. The growing seasons are longer than in the North, varying from six months in the upper South to nine months in the Gulf states. The economy, predominantly agricultural, was characterized by the presence of the large plantation as well as the small farm. Farming was largely commercial, concentrating on producing certain staple crops—cotton, tobacco, sugar, and rice—for sale to outside

areas. Unlike the West, the South disposed of the bulk of its products in England and Europe rather than the domestic market; it felt closer economic ties with England than with the Northeast. The South was a rural land, with fewer cities, towns, and villages than there were in the Northern states, and its population was more diffused (about thirteen persons per square mile in 1860 as compared with twenty in the North). The great majority of the Southern white people were Anglo-Saxon in origin and in cultural ideals and Protestant in religion.

The South was the only area in the United States (indeed in all the Western world except for Brazil and Cuba) where slavery still existed. It was the only section that contained vast numbers of a race other than white. Southerners might differ among themselves on political and economic questions, but by the 1850s they had closed ranks on the issue of race. They were determined to keep the South a white man's country, and they viewed slavery as the best means to that end. Thus slavery was more than a labor system. It was also a white-supremacy device, and as such it finally enlisted the support of the Southern white masses, including the great majority who did

not own slaves. Race consciousness, then, helped to account for the oneness of the South.

An ever mounting condemnation of slavery came not only from the Northern states but also from the Latin American countries that had outlawed it, and from Great Britain, whose government had abolished it throughout the British Empire in 1833. The South was an area of Western civilization—not a nation but a section of a nation (and in point of population a minority section)—that cherished an institution at variance with the culture of the civilization of which it was a part.

Thoughtful Southerners realized that slavery isolated them from most of the rest of mankind. Said William Harper of South Carolina: "The judgment is made up. We can have no hearing before the tribunal of the civilized world. Yet, on this very account, it is more important that we, the inhabitants of the slaveholding States, insulated as we are by this institution, and cut off, in some degree, from the communion and sympathies of the world by which we are surrounded, . . . and exposed continually to their animadversions and attacks, should thoroughly understand this subject, and our strength and weakness in relation to it."

Was slavery profitable? On the whole, the planters themselves believed they were making very satisfactory profits. At the same time there can be no doubt that the slave system, or rather the economic system of which slavery was a part, retarded Southern development and posed some grave problems for the section. Because of the concentration on agriculture, the South had to purchase its finished goods from the outside. Thoughtful Southerners realized the economic subordination of their region. "From the rattle with which the nurse tickles the ear of the child born in the South to the shroud that covers the cold form of the dead, everything comes to us from the North," exclaimed Albert Pike. Said a writer in *De Bow's Review*: "I think it would be safe to estimate the amount which is lost to us annually by our vassalage to the North at \$100,000,000. Great God!" The antebellum South had a colonial economy.

The white Southerners' sense of being exploited by the North, together with their race consciousness and their minority status in the nation and in the world, intensified their feeling of sectional unity.

## GRADATIONS OF WHITE SOCIETY

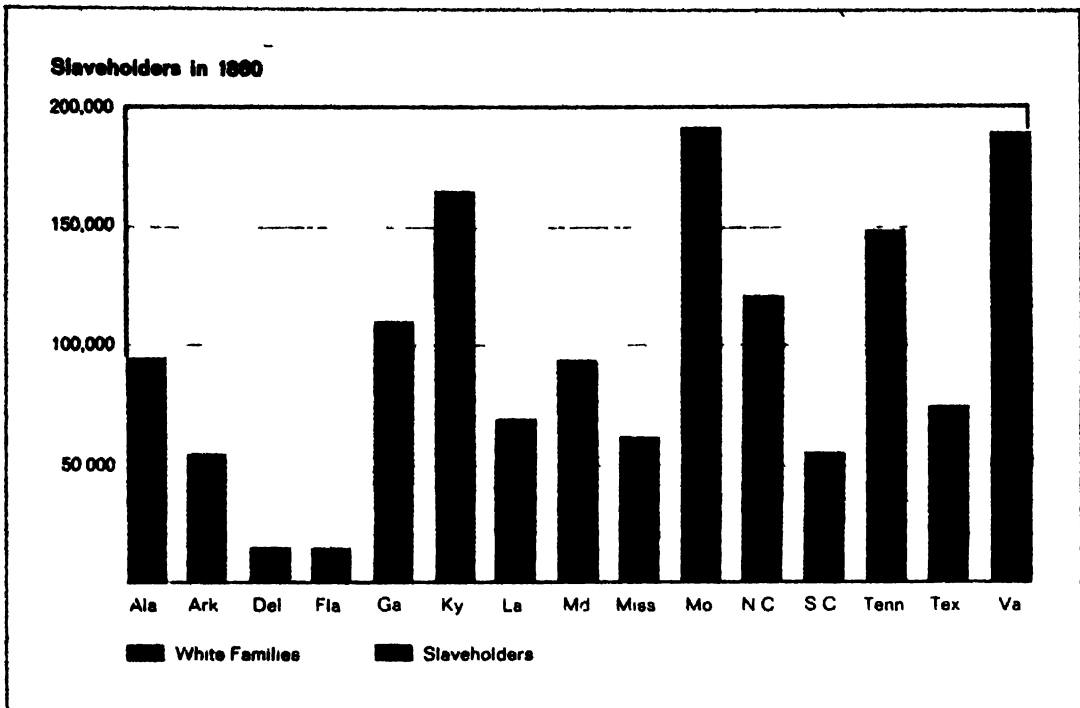
Only a minority of Southern whites owned slaves. In 1850, when the total white population of the South was over 6 million, the number of slaveholders was 347,525. In 1860, when the white population was just above 8 million (the slave population was 3,950,513), the number of slaveholders had risen to only 383,637. These figures, taken in themselves, give a somewhat misleading impression. Each slaveholder was normally the head of a family averaging five members. To arrive at the number of whites having a proprietary interest in slavery, it is necessary to multiply by five the number of slaveholders. This formula shows 1,737,625 whites connected with slave ownership in 1850, and 1,937,625 in 1860. Broadly speaking, one family in four owned slaves. Of the minority of whites holding slaves, only a small proportion owned substantial numbers.

At the apex of society stood the large planters—the cotton magnates and the sugar, rice, and tobacco nabobs—who owned at least forty or fifty slaves and 800 or more acres. Next came the small and medium planters, with ten to forty slaves apiece. Farmers with from one to nine slaves outranked those more numerous farmers who owned none at all.

The total number of planters—large, medium, and small—was 92,257 in 1850. The large planters represented the social ideal of the South. Enriched by vast annual incomes, dwelling in palatial homes, surrounded by broad acres and many black servants, they were the class to which all others paid a certain deference. Enabled by their wealth to practice the leisured arts, they cultivated gracious living, good manners, learning, and politics. Their social pattern determined to a considerable degree the tone of all Southern society.

The Southern planters constituted the closest approach to an aristocracy to be found in the United States. They enjoyed in their section a higher social position, a greater political power, a more unquestioned leadership than did the factory owners of the Northeast.

Class distinctions were more sharply drawn in the South than in other sections. Some Southerners spoke scornfully of democracy. Yet, particularly in the newer states, an ambitious person could move from one class to another. Farmers nursed the hope of becoming small slaveholders, and small planters aimed to



*The proportion of slaveholding families in relation to the total white families tended to be higher in the cotton states of the Deep South than in the border states. For example, the number of slaveholders in Georgia and Kentucky was approximately the same, yet in Georgia they constituted almost half of the white population while in Kentucky they represented less than one-third.*

become large ones. Many achieved their goal. In fact, the great majority of the cotton lords of the Mississippi Valley states had come from the ranks of the obscure and the ordinary. Planters who wished to exercise political influence, whether or not they believed in majority rule, had to affect democratic manners and mouth principles that would please the multitudes.

The farmers, those who owned a few slaves and the greater number who owned none, lived lives of rude plenty, devoting more attention to subsistence farming than did the planters. Most of them owned their land. During the 1850s the number of nonslaveholding landowners increased much faster than the number of slaveholding landowners.

In Southern society the business classes—the manufacturers and merchants—were of considerable importance, though comparatively few. Flour milling and textile and iron manu-

facturing were the main Southern industries, with the principal mill areas being located in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. The Tredgar Iron Works in Richmond compared favorably with the best iron mills in the Northeast. The value of Southern textile goods increased from \$1.5 million in 1840 to \$4.5 million in 1860. Despite some promising beginnings, however, Southern industry before 1860 remained largely in a formative stage. Most Southerners showed a distaste for industrialism, and those with surplus capital usually preferred to invest it in slaves and land.

More important than the budding manufacturers were the merchants, particularly the brokers or factors who marketed the planters' crops. These individuals, in towns like New Orleans, Charleston, Mobile, and Savannah, acted as selling agents for the planters, and sometimes also as purchasing agents. Fre-

quently the broker became a banker to the planter, furnishing money or goods on credit. In such cases the planter might be in debt to his factor for a long period, during which time he would have to consign his entire crop to the broker. The merchant-broker, dominating as he did the credit facilities of the rural South, was in a position to exert great economic pressure on the planter.

Closely linked economically with the planters were the professional classes—lawyers, editors, doctors, and others. Because their well-being largely depended on planter prosperity, the professional groups usually agreed with and voiced the ideals of the dominant class.

In the Southern mountains—the Appalachian ranges east of the Mississippi and the Ozarks west of the river—lived the Southern highlanders, the white groups set most apart from the mainstream of Southern life. These mountaineers practiced a crude form of subsistence agriculture, with practically no slaves. They had a proud sense of seclusion, and they held to old ways and old ideals, which included the ideal of loyalty to the nation as a whole. The mountain region was the only part of the South that defied the trend toward sectional conformity.

Occupying the lowest position in Southern white society was that tragic and degraded class known as the poor whites, who in 1850 totaled perhaps half a million. The poor whites were distinct from the ordinary farmers and from the highlanders. The “crackers,” “sand hillers,” or “white trash” occupied the infertile lands of the pine barrens, the red hills, and the swamps. Here they lived in miserable cabins surrounded by almost unbelievable squalor. Their degradation resulted partly from dietary deficiencies and disease. Afflicted by pellagra, hookworm, and malaria, the poor whites resorted to eating clay, a practice which in itself indicated a serious shortcoming in their diet.

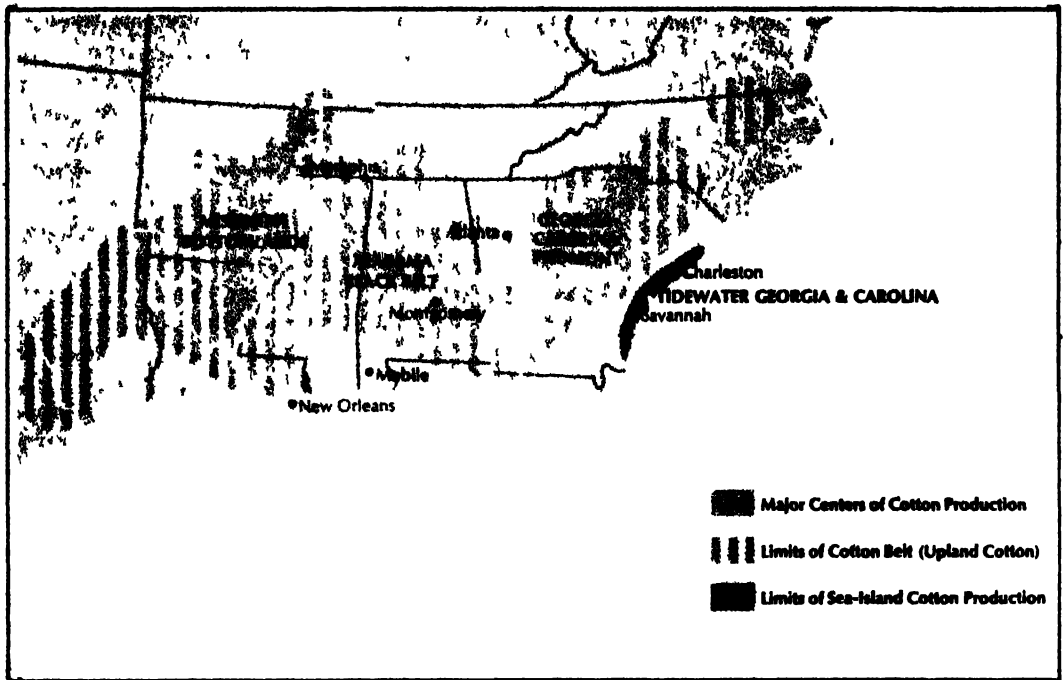
## KING COTTON

The Southern agricultural system was organized around the great staples: tobacco, rice, sugar, and above all cotton. These were the section's money crops, but they did not constitute by any means its only forms of agricultural

effort. What might be termed general or diversified farming was carried on in many areas, notably in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and the Bluegrass region of central Kentucky. Most planters aimed to produce on the plantation the foodstuffs needed by the family and the slaves. On some large plantations, more acres were planted in corn than in cotton, and in 1850 half the corn crop of the country was raised in the South. The section produced 87 percent of the nation's hemp supply (in Kentucky and Missouri) and 80 percent of its peas and beans. Other important products of Southern husbandry were apples, peaches, peanuts, sweet potatoes, hogs, and mules. Despite the planters' efforts to achieve self-sufficiency, they could not supply all the needs of their slaves, and large amounts of corn and pork had to be imported annually from the Northwest.

But the staples dominated the economic life of the section and absorbed the attention of the majority of the people. Climatic and geographical conditions dictated the areas where each was produced. Tobacco, which needed only a fairly short growing season (six months), was grown in tidewater Maryland west of the Chesapeake, in piedmont Virginia and adjacent North Carolina, in northern and western Kentucky, in northwestern Tennessee, and in the Missouri River Valley of Missouri. Rice demanded a growing season of nine months and irrigation, and hence was restricted to the coastal region of South Carolina and Georgia. Sugar, with a similar period necessary for maturation, was concentrated in southern Louisiana and a small area in eastern Texas (around Galveston). Cotton, which required a growing season of seven to nine months and could be produced in a variety of soil formations, occupied the largest zone of production. The Cotton Kingdom stretched from North Carolina to Texas.

From the sale of the great staples, the South derived its chief sources of revenue. Into the markets of the world in the 1850s the section poured annually over 400,000 pounds of tobacco, over 360,000 hogsheads of sugar, and over 240,000 pounds of rice. But the big money crop was cotton. From 1 million bales in 1830, Southern production of cotton steadily increased until it reached 4 million bales in 1860. In that year Southern cotton brought \$191 million in the European markets and constituted



**Major Centers of Cotton Production in the Antebellum South**

almost two-thirds of the total export trade of the United States. (By way of contrast, the annual value of the rice crop was \$2 million.) No wonder that Southerners said smugly, "Cotton is King."

As cotton culture expanded, the centers of production moved westward into the fresher lands of Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. The extension of the Cotton Kingdom into this area bore certain resemblances to the rush of gold seekers into a new frontier. The prospect of tremendous profits quickly drew settlers by the thousands. Some who came were wealthy planters from the older states who transferred their assets and slaves to a cotton plantation. Most were small slaveholders or slaveless farmers who intended to become planters.

A similar shift occurred in slave population. The number of slaves in Alabama leaped from 41,000 in 1820 to 435,000 in 1860, and in Mississippi from 32,000 to 436,000. In the same period in Virginia, the increase was only from

425,000 to 490,000. It has been estimated that between 1840 and 1860, 410,000 slaves were moved from the upper South to the cotton states.

Like the farmers of the Northwest, those of the South employed methods that exhausted the soil. They gave little attention to crop rotation, the use of fertilizers, or deep plowing. Like other Americans, they considered it easier to migrate to new lands than to restore old ones. Still, there were agricultural societies and journals in the South, as in the other sections, and there were dedicated individuals who labored to improve farm techniques. Such a man was the famous Edmund Ruffin of Virginia, advocate of fertilization, rotation, and deep plowing. The author of a work on calcareous manures and the founder of the excellent *Farmers' Register*, Ruffin was one of the best agricultural experts in the country during the 1850s. Through his efforts and those of others, some progress in checking soil depletion was made in the older states.

## THE MIND OF THE SOUTH

Most Southerners took their literary cues from English or New York sources. Though the planters bought books in large numbers, they usually chose the works of English and Northern writers, almost ignoring the authors of their own section. They showed the same lack of appreciation for Southern magazines. Of the one hundred magazines founded in the South, only nine survived for any length of time. And of the nine, only three attained much vogue: the excellent literary journals, *The Southern Literary Messenger* (Richmond, 1834-1864) and *The Southern Quarterly Review* (New Orleans and Charleston, 1842-1857), and the magazine of Southern commercial and agricultural expansion, *De Bow's Review* (New Orleans, 1846-1880). Even these periodicals had to take second place to Northern productions. In that hotbed of Southern sentiment, Charleston, *De Bow's Review* sold an average of 173 copies while *Harper's Magazine* was regularly purchased by 1,500 Carolinians.

Considering the bleak reception accorded local authors, it is surprising that the section contained as many fine writers as it did. In the 1830s most of the outstanding authors had been from the Virginia-Maryland area: Nathaniel Beverly Tucker (*The Partisan Leader*), William Alexander Caruthers (*The Cavaliers of Virginia*), and John Pendleton Kennedy (*Swallow Barn* and *Horseshoe Robinson*). They were novelists who wrote historical romances or romantic eulogies of the plantation system in the upper South. After 1840 the Southern literary capital shifted to Charleston. Here lived and wrote the antebellum South's most distinguished man of letters, William Gilmore Simms. Primarily a novelist, although he composed some tolerable poetry, Simms wrote over thirty works of fiction, some of them novels (such as *The Yemassee*) glorifying Charleston and South Carolina, others historical romances of the Revolution. He had a rare talent for earthy description of common folk, and his better work compares favorably with that of James Fenimore Cooper. Other Charlestonians were Hugh Swinton Legaré, perhaps the best linguist in America and authority on the history of law, and the young poets Henry Timrod and Paul Hamilton Hayne, who would achieve their chief renown after the Civil War.

Producing works more distinctively American were the writers of the Southern frontier. These men depicted the society of the backwoods rural areas; they described ordinary people and poor whites instead of aristocratic cavaliers; they were deliberately and sometimes painfully realistic; and they seasoned their sketches with a robust, vulgar humor that was something new in American literature. The leading frontier writer was Augustus B. Longstreet of Georgia (*Georgia Scenes*). Others who wrote in the same vein were Joseph G. Baldwin (*Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi*) and Johnson J. Hooper (*Some Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs*). Together, these Southern realists established a tradition of humor that was uniquely American and that was ultimately to find a supreme exponent in Mark Twain.

It has been said (by H. C. Nixon) that in the South there were more people who could read Latin and fewer who could read English than in any other part of the country. The educational system of the section reflected the aristocratic ideals of the plantation regime. In 1860 there were 260 Southern colleges and universities, public and private, with 25,000 students enrolled in them, or more than half the total number of students in the United States. The South had twice as many students per 1,000 of white population in college as any other section. The lower South had 11,000 students in its institutions of higher learning, while New England, with approximately the same population, could boast of only 3,748. Below the college level, the schools of the South were not only fewer but also inferior to those of the East, but about as good as those of the West. Libraries where an enterprising individual might educate himself also were fewer in the South. In Louisiana there were only one hundred books to each 1,218 white people, while in Massachusetts there were one hundred to each 118 persons. The South had over 500,000 white illiterates, or more than half of the country's total.

In the fields of belles-lettres and science, the South was primarily a section of consumers rather than producers. The section did not produce a literature or a body of scientific findings to compare with those of the Northeast. Among the reasons for the relative backwardness of the South was the rural character of the region. There were few cities, and not one like

New York or Boston that could act as a focal point of culture, and there were few publishing facilities. The high illiteracy rate among white adults decreased the potential reading audience. In the simple nature of Southern society there were few complexities to intrigue the writer and impel him to find an explanation. The planters, the class that might have patronized a Southern literature, considered oratory and statesmanship to be much more significant activities. At a time when writing was becoming a recognized and respected profession in the North, Southern authors, as so many of

them bitterly testified, were regarded as amusing fellows who had little to offer their society.

Furthermore, after 1830 much of the creative energy of the South was channeled into the defense of slavery. Under criticism from the outside, the section felt a compulsion to glorify its image of itself and to enforce conformity to that image. Freedom of thought, which was largely accepted in the North and which Jefferson and other former Southern leaders had said was necessary in a good society, was stifled in the South.

## The "Peculiar Institution"

When slaveowners referred to the "peculiar institution" of the South, they did not mean to imply that slavery was somehow odd or queer. Rather, they indicated their belief that it was special and distinctive.

### THE REGIMEN OF SLAVERY

Slavery was an institution established by law and regulated in detail by law. The slave codes of the Southern states forbade a slave to hold property, to leave his master's premises without permission, to be out after dark, to congregate with other slaves except at church, to carry firearms, to strike a white man even in self-defense. The codes prohibited teaching a slave to read or write, and denied the right of a slave to testify in court against a white person. They contained no provisions to legalize slave marriages or divorces. Any person showing a strain of African ancestry was presumed to be a slave unless he could prove otherwise. If an owner killed a slave while punishing him, the act was not considered a crime.

These and dozens of other restrictions and impositions indicate that the slaves lived under a harsh and dismal regime, which would have been unrelieved had the laws been drastically enforced. In fact, they were applied unevenly. Sometimes slaves did acquire property, were taught to read and write, and assembled with other slaves, the laws to the contrary notwithstanding. Most slave offenses were tried by the master, who might inflict punishments ranging from some mild disciplinary action to flogging or branding for running away. Major offenses, including crimes, were generally referred to the courts. Slaves faced the death penalty for the following offenses: killing or even resisting a white person and inciting to revolt or even participating in what was suspected to be an insurrectionary plot.

The routine of plantation life was governed by a system of rules created by custom and the planters. A small planter directly supervised the work on his place. A medium or large planter hired an overseer and perhaps an assistant overseer to represent him. The "head driver," a trusted and responsible slave, acted under

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**Slave Scenes**

*Photographs of slaves at work or performing any function are almost impossible to obtain. But during the Civil War and after it photographs of Negroes on plantations were taken, and these often reproduce the conditions of labor and life under slavery. Thus the picture of the cotton pickers (top right) is postwar, but the harvesting techniques were the same as those used before the war. The other picture (bottom right) shows Negro, or slave, quarters on a South Carolina plantation. (Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society, New York City)*





the overseer as a kind of foreman. Under him might be several subdrivers. Two methods or systems of assigning slave labor were employed. One was the task system, most widely used in rice culture. Here a slave was allotted a particular task in the morning, say to hoe one acre; when he completed his job he was free for the rest of the day. The other was the gang system, employed on the cotton, sugar, and tobacco plantations. Here the slaves were simply divided into groups, each of which was directed by a driver, and were worked for as many hours as the overseer considered a reasonable work day.

Slaves were provided with at least enough necessities to enable them to live and work. They were furnished with an adequate if rough diet, consisting mainly of corn meal, salt pork, and molasses. Many were allowed to raise gardens for their own use and were issued fresh meats on special occasions. They received issues of cheap clothes and shoes. They lived in rude cabins, called the slave quarters. Medical care was provided by the plantation mistress or a doctor retained by the owner. The slave worked hard, beginning with light tasks as a child, and his workday was longest at harvest time. He sometimes had time off to hunt and fish, and he attended the church services and some of the social festivities of his white family.

The master had an economic interest in taking reasonably good care of his slaves. He was likely to use hired labor, when available, for the most unhealthful or dangerous tasks. A traveler in Louisiana noted, for example, that Irishmen were employed to clear malarial swamps and to handle cotton bales at the bottom of chutes extending from the river bluff down to a boat landing. If an Irishman died of disease or was killed in an accident, the master could hire another for a dollar a day or less. But he would be out perhaps a thousand dollars or more if he lost a prime field hand. Still, a cruel master might forget his pocketbook in the heat of momentary anger. And slaves were often left to the discipline of an overseer, who had no pecuniary stake in their well-being; he was paid in proportion to the amount of work he could get out of them.

Household servants had a somewhat easier life than did field hands. On a small plantation the same persons might serve in both capacities, but on a large one there would be a

separate staff of nursemaids, housemaids, cooks, butlers, coachmen, and the like. These people lived close to the master and his family, eating the leftovers from the family table, and in some cases even sleeping in the "big house." Between the blacks and whites of such a household, there might develop an affectionate, almost familial relationship.

Slavery in the cities differed significantly from slavery in the country. On the more or less isolated plantation the slaves were kept apart from free Negroes and lower-class whites. The master, his family, and his overseers maintained a fairly direct and effective control. A deep and unbridgeable chasm yawned between slavery and freedom. In the city, however, the master often could not supervise his slaves closely and at the same time use them profitably. Even if they slept at night in carefully watched backyard barracks, they went about by day on errands of various kinds. Others were hired out, and after hours they fended for themselves, neither the owner nor the employer caring to look after them. Thus the urban slaves gained numerous opportunities to mingle with free Negroes and with whites, including fair-complexioned prostitutes. A line between slavery and freedom remained, but it became less and less distinct.

Indeed, slavery was basically incompatible with city life, and as Southern cities grew, the number of slaves in them dropped, relatively if not absolutely. The reasons were social rather than economic. Fearing conspiracies and insurrections, urban slaveowners sold off much of their male property to the countryside. The cities were left with an excess of Negro women while continuing to have an excess of white men (a circumstance that helped to account for the birth of many mulattoes). While slavery in the cities declined, segregation of Negroes both free and slave increased. Segregation was a means of social control intended to make up for the loosening of the discipline of slavery itself.

The transfer of slaves from one part of the South to another (when the slaves were not carried by their migrating owners) was accomplished through the medium of professional slave traders. In long-distance traffic the slaves were moved on trains or on river or ocean steamers. Or they were moved on foot, trudging in coffles of hundreds along the dusty highways. Eventually they arrived at some central

market like Natchez, New Orleans, Mobile, or Galveston, where purchasers collected to bid for them. At the auction the bidders checked the slaves like livestock, watching them as they were made to walk or trot, inspecting their teeth, feeling their arms and legs, looking for signs of infirmity or age. It paid to be careful, for traders were known to deceive buyers by blacking gray hair, oiling withered skin, and concealing physical defects in other ways. A sound young field hand would fetch a price that, during the 1840s and 1850s, varied from \$500 to \$1,700, depending mainly on fluctuations in the price of cotton. The average figure was about \$800. A good-looking "fancy girl," desirable as a concubine, might bring several times that much.

The domestic slave trade, while essential to the growth and prosperity of the whole system, was one of the least defensible aspects of it. Not only did the trade dehumanize all who were involved in it; it also separated children from parents, and parents from one another. Even in the case of a kindly master who had kept families together, they might be broken up in the division of his estate after his death. Planters condoned the trade and eased their consciences by holding the traders in contempt and assigning them a low social position—except those who invested their profits in plantations (like Nathan Bedford Forrest, a slave trader and then a planter and eventually a war hero of the Confederacy).

The foreign slave trade was as bad or worse. Though federal law had prohibited the importation of slaves from 1808 on, they continued to be smuggled in as late as the 1850s. The numbers can only be guessed at. They were not large enough to satisfy all planters, and the Southern commercial conventions, which met annually to consider means of making the South economically independent, began to discuss the legal reopening of the trade. "If it is right to buy slaves in Virginia and carry them to New Orleans," William L. Yancey of Alabama asked his fellow delegates at the 1858 meeting, "why is it not right to buy them in Cuba, Brazil, or Africa and carry them there?" The convention that year voted to recommend the repeal of all laws against slave imports. Only the delegates from the states of the upper South, which profited from the domestic trade, opposed the opening of foreign competition.

## THE SLAVE'S RESPONSE

Slaves reacted to slavery in a variety of ways. Some, especially among favored domestic servants, identified with the master and accepted their subservient position with little difficulty, perhaps with real contentment. Others learned to adjust to necessity by acting out, in the white man's presence, the expected role of shuffling, grinning, head-scratching deference. Still others could never quite bring themselves to either acceptance or accommodation. They harbored an unquenchable spirit of rebelliousness, and from the frustration it brought them they sometimes developed personality disorders (signs of these were seen in newspaper advertisements for runaways who were described as having a stutter or other behavioral quirks).

For the vast majority, there was no way out of their predicament. A few were allowed to earn money with which they managed to buy their own and their families' freedom. Some had the good luck to be set free by their master's will after his death—like the more than 400 slaves belonging to John Randolph of Roanoke (1833). From the 1830s on, however, state laws made it more and more difficult, and in some cases practically impossible, for an owner to manumit his slaves. The laws, when permitting manumission, often required the removal of the freed slaves from the state. The masters objected to the very presence of free Negroes, who by their existence set a disturbing example for the slaves.

By 1860 there nevertheless were about 250,000 free Negroes in the slaveholding states, more than half of them in Virginia and Maryland. A few, as in the North, attained wealth and prominence. A few themselves owned slaves, usually relatives whom they had bought in order to assure their ultimate emancipation. Most lived in abject poverty, even worse than in the North. Law or custom closed many occupations to them, forbade them to assemble without white supervision, and placed numerous other restraints upon them. They were only quasi-free, and yet they had all the burdens of freedom, including the obligation of paying taxes.

Great as were the hardships of freedom, Negroes generally preferred them to the hardships of slavery. Occasionally slaves sought

freedom through flight. They might succeed in hiding out for a time, but the chance of escaping to the North or to Canada was exceedingly slim except for those who lived fairly close to the free-state border and who got help from free Negroes and friendly whites on the so-called Underground Railroad. For fugitives from the deep South, the hazards of distance and geographical ignorance, of white patrols and bloodhounds, were hard if not impossible to overcome, especially since every Negro at large was presumed to be a runaway slave unless he carried documentary proof to the contrary.

The discontented slave could express his feelings through individual acts of resistance. He might be deliberately careless with his master's property, losing or breaking tools, setting fire to houses or barns. He might make himself useless by cutting off his fingers or even committing suicide. Or, despite the terrible consequences, he might turn upon the master and kill him.

The idea of combining with other blacks, rising up, and overthrowing the masters occurred to slaves and free Negroes from time to time. In 1800 Gabriel Prosser gathered a thousand rebellious slaves outside of Richmond, but two blacks gave the plot away, and the Virginia militia were called out in time to head it off. Gabriel and thirty-five others were executed. In 1822 the Charleston free Negro Denmark Vesey and his followers—rumored to total 9,000—made preparations for revolt, but again

the word leaked out and retribution followed. In 1831 Nat Turner, a slave preacher, led a band of Negroes who armed themselves with guns and axes and, on a summer night, went from house to house in Southampton County, Virginia. They slaughtered sixty white men, women, and children before being overpowered by state and federal troops. More than a hundred Negroes were put to death in the aftermath. Nat Turner's was the only actual slave insurrection in the nineteenth-century South, but slave conspiracies and threats of renewed violence continued throughout the section as long as slavery lasted.

### THE PROSLAVERY REACTION

By the 1830s slavery was being threatened from three directions—from the slaves themselves, from Northern abolitionists, and from Southern slaveless farmers. There were still antislavery societies in the South, and as late as 1827 there had been a larger number than in the North. They were most numerous in the border slave states, where a few antislavery men, notably Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky, kept up their campaign through the 1850s. Between 1829 and 1832 a Virginia constitutional convention and then the state legislature, responding to demands from nonslaveholders in the western part of the state, seriously considered ending slavery through compensated emancipation but were discouraged by the tremendous expense it would have required.

### Calhoun on Slavery [1837]

*I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slaveholding States between the two is, instead of an evil, a good—a positive good. I feel myself called upon to speak freely upon the subject where the honor and interests of those I represent are involved. I hold then, that there never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, live on the labor of the other. . . . I may say with truth that in few countries so much is left to the share of the laborer, and so little exacted from him, or where there is more kind attention paid to him in sickness or infirmities of age. Compare his condition with the tenants of the poor houses in the more civilized portions of Europe—look at the sick and the old and infirm slave, on one hand, in the midst of his family and friends, under the kind superintending care of his master and mistress, and compare it with the forlorn and wretched condition of the pauper in the poor house.*

# The Slave's Response to Slavery

For many years after its publication in 1918 Ulrich B. Phillips' *American Negro Slavery* was accepted as the standard authority on the subject. A Georgian by birth and upbringing, Phillips assumed (as defenders of slavery had done before the Civil War) that the typical plantation Negro was lazy, childlike, irresponsible, contented, and submissive – all because of his African racial make-up. The wrench from Africa and the subjection to the new discipline had little more effect upon his temperament than upon his complexion. Phillips believed, however, that the American Negro kept little, if any, of his African cultural inheritance (his native customs, language, and life) as distinct from his temperament. On this point, even black scholars long felt compelled to agree. As late as 1939 the black sociologist E. Franklin Frazier wrote:

Probably never before in history has a people been so nearly stripped of its social heritage as the Negroes who were brought to America.

Eventually strong disquiet appeared. In *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941) the white anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits emphasized the ruggedness of African life that survived through slavery times and after. In *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1941) the Marxist historian Herbert Aptheker claimed to have discovered approximately two hundred and fifty revolts and conspiracies in the history of American Negro slavery. He denounced the individual acts of resistance. Aptheker concluded that discontent and rebelliousness were not only exceedingly common

but characteristic of American Negro slaves. In *The Peculiar Institution* (1955) Erik F. Foner approved the black slaves as "a group of men and women who reacted to slavery in a variety of ways that white people would have done in the same circumstances."

Herbert Aptheker, Stanley M. Elkins, provoked continuing controversy with *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*. They agreed with Phillips that the typical slave had a "Sambo" personality but accounted for it on opposite life emphases. According to Phillips, a slave's helplessness, his lack of freedom, and the enforced adjustment to his inferior power, nullified his sense of the master. He was too intimidated to mount the threat that a Nazi concentration camp might have posed. In the process, the slave lost the cultural independence that might have helped them to maintain their personal independence. Slave rebels such as Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner, found out because they were a Elkins words, "so exceptional as to be few."

The black historian John Blassingame agreed with Herskovits and completely disagreed with Elkins. The most remarkable aspect of the whole process of enslavement, Blassingame declared in *The Slave Community* (1975) – the extent to which the American born slaves were able to retain their ancestral culture. According to Blassingame, they retained it largely through the slave family, which, even though it had no legal basis, served as an important survival mechanism and enabled its members to "cooperate with other blacks and maintain their self-esteem."

On the basis of an elaborate quantitative study, Robert W. Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman concluded in *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (1974) that planters themselves, out of self-interest, encouraged stable family relationships among the slaves. These authors also found the slaves to have been typically not lazy, inefficient "Sambo" types, but very productive workers, many of them skilled.

Meanwhile the news of the Turner insurrection terrified whites in Virginia and all over the South. They had always been uneasy, always mindful of the horrors of the successful slave uprising in Santo Domingo (in the 1790s). Now they were reminded of their insecurity, and they were especially horrified because there had been long-trusted house servants among Nat's followers who, axe in hand, had suddenly confronted their masters' sleeping families. Who among the blacks could the whites really depend upon? Many of the master class now blamed Garrison and the abolitionists for the slaves' defection. Planters were determined to make slavery secure against all dangers.

While the Southern states strengthened their slave codes, controlling the movement of slaves and prohibiting their being taught to read, Southern leaders proceeded to elaborate an intellectual defense of slavery. In 1832 Professor Thomas R. Dew of the College of William and Mary published a pamphlet outlining the slavery case. In subsequent years many others added their contributions to the cause, and in 1852 the defense was summed up in an anthology, *The Pro-Slavery Argument*.

As early as 1837 John C. Calhoun boasted that Southerners had ceased to apologize for slavery as a necessary evil and had been convinced that it was "a good—a positive good." According to the proslavery argument it was good for the slave because he was an inferior creature who needed the master's guidance and who was better off—better fed, clothed, and housed, and more secure—than the Northern factory worker. It was good for Southern society because it was the only way two races so different as the black and the white could live together in peace. It was good for the nation as a whole because the entire Southern economy depended on it, and the prosperity of the nation depended on the prosperity of the South. It was good in itself because the Bible sanctioned it—did not the Hebrews of the Old Testament own bondsmen, and did not the New Testament apostle Paul advise, "Servants, obey your masters"? These and other arguments convinced most Southerners, even those (the great majority) who owned no slaves and had no direct interest in the peculiar institution.

Some proslavery propagandists concluded

that slavery was such a good thing it should be extended to include white workers in the North as well as black laborers in the South. In *Sociology for the South, or the Failure of Free Society* (1854) George Fitzhugh, of Virginia, praised slavery as the only workable form of socialism and urged the whole world to adopt it, at once, as the sole cure for class conflict and the other ills of competitive society.

While spreading proslavery propaganda, Southern leaders tried to silence the advocates of freedom. Southern critics of slavery found it healthful to leave home, among them Hinton Rowan Helper of North Carolina, whose *Impending Crisis of the South* (1857) contended that slavery hurt the welfare of the nonslaveholder and made the whole region backward. In 1835 a mob destroyed sacks containing abolition literature in the Charleston post office, and thereafter Southern postmasters generally refused to deliver antislavery mail. Southern state legislatures passed resolutions demanding that Northern states suppress the "incendiary" agitation of the abolitionists. In Congress, Southern representatives with the cooperation of Northerners secured the adoption of the "gag rule" (1836) according to which antislavery petitions were automatically laid on the table without being read.

As a champion of freedom of speech and petition, John Quincy Adams led a struggle against the gag rule, finally (1844) securing its repeal. Throughout the North many people who were not abolitionists began to feel that civil liberties were endangered in the entire country, not just the South. These people were inclined to sympathize with the abolitionist as a martyr for freedom in the broadest sense. They came to suspect that there really existed, as the abolitionist claimed, a kind of "Slave Power Conspiracy" to destroy the liberties of the country as a whole. They began to wonder, as Abraham Lincoln did, whether the nation could long continue to be half slave and half free—whether the nation might not become all slave. Thus the majority of Northerners, though not necessarily for love of the Negro, eventually came to sympathize in varying degrees with the antislavery cause, while an even larger and more determined majority of Southerners rallied to the defense of the peculiar institution thereby laying the foundation for a "solid South."

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\*Titles available in paperback.

# Fruits of Manifest Destiny







## Thirteen

In the time of James K. Polk the egalitarian spirit of Jacksonian Democracy broadened into a nationalistic demand for military conquest. Expansionism seemed a corollary of egalitarianism to Democratic party intellectuals who rationalized the demand. Conquest was Manifest Destiny—a phrase coined by a party journalist who in 1845 prophesied ‘the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.’ In other words the United States had a divine mission to take the whole of North America by force if necessary and thus make room for its own rapidly growing people while carrying the blessings of democracy to less favored peoples who happened to occupy attractive lands nearby.

Not all Americans of the time agreed with that view. Many, especially among the Whigs, believed their country had a mission to encourage the American brand of democracy and civilization throughout the continent and indeed the entire world—but only by peaceful means. ‘I have always wished,’ said Daniel Webster, for one, ‘that this country should exhibit to the nations of the earth the example of a great, rich and powerful republic which is not possessed by a spirit of aggrandizement.’

Even the forceful expansionists were not motivated merely by the grandiose notion of Manifest Destiny. They usually had fairly specific goals in mind. Polk himself focused his attention on the two great natural harbor areas of the Pacific Coast—Puget Sound and San Francisco Bay. Nor did the expansionists press their conquests to include the entire North American continent. During the expansionist flurry of the 1840s and 1850s the United States attained essentially the size and shape that it still has (so far as the forty-eight contiguous states are concerned). It might have

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### **Migrants Crossing the Missouri**

*The Mormon Trail and one branch of the Oregon Trail crossed the Missouri River between Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska, a town that a ferry company laid out in 1854. Here westward migrants with their covered wagons are being ferried over. From an illustration in James Linforth's *Route from Liverpool to the Great Salt Lake Valley* (1855). (Library of Congress)*

added other territories—including overseas possessions such as Cuba and the Hawaiian Islands—if the expansionists had remained sufficiently united in their aims. But they came to be divided on the question of slavery in the new acquisitions.

Expansion arose from nationalism and ultimately was to strengthen it. But the immediate result was to endanger national unity, for expansion provoked and intensified sectional conflict. And because of this conflict the acquisition of an overseas empire was to be postponed for half a century.

The fruition of Manifest Destiny was not to come until after the election of 1844 had brought the Democrats back into power. Meanwhile, the Whigs found themselves divided and frustrated despite their overwhelming victory in the “log cabin” campaign of 1840, which had brought into office their appealing ticket of “Tippecanoe and Tyler too.”

“Old Tippecanoe,” William Henry Harrison, was never to have a chance to demonstrate what sort of President he would have made. Though he seemed to be in good health, he was sixty-eight years old in 1841, and the strain of the campaign and the inauguration and the pressing demands of his office-seeking supporters were apparently too much for him. He contracted a cold which turned into pneumonia, and he died on April 4, 1841, exactly one month after he had been inaugurated—the first President to die in office. In his brief presidential tenure he had looked for advice to the accepted leaders of the party, particularly to Clay and Webster. Webster became secretary of state, and four of Clay’s friends went into the cabinet. Clay and Webster had expected to guide the old soldier through the political jungle, but now Tippecanoe was dead. “Tyler too,” a practicing politician and a Southern Whig, was in the White House.

### **FRUSTRATION OF THE WHIGS**

Vice President John Tyler, though some contended he was merely the second officer acting as the first, immediately assumed the title as well as the powers of the presidency. For the time being, he kept Harrison’s cabinet. A member of an aristocratic Virginia family, Tyler had left the Democratic party in protest

against Jackson’s overly equalitarian program and imperious methods. One reason the Whigs had put him on the ticket with Harrison was the hope that he would attract the votes of similar conservative former Democrats. Nevertheless, Clay apparently had the impression that the new President would support a national bank and other Whig projects, but Tyler soon broke with Clay.

A part of Clay’s program was enacted without causing serious division in the party. With near unanimity the Whigs passed a measure, which Tyler signed, abolishing the Independent Treasury system. They also agreed on a bill, the Tariff of 1842, which raised the rates to approximately the same level as in 1832. Tyler accepted this bill, too, but with no great show of enthusiasm.

Part of the Whig legislative program made a bid for the approval of Western settlers and farmers. The frontier was continuing its steady expansion. Arkansas became a state in 1836, Michigan in 1837, and Florida in 1845. The greatest rush of settlers was into the future states of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. To attract Western voters the Whig leadership put through the Preemption Act of 1841, which made it possible for a man to claim 160 acres of land before they were offered publicly for sale and to pay for them later at \$1.25 an acre. This “log cabin bill” was hailed by the Whigs as a relief measure for sufferers from the depression and as a proof of their party’s devotion to the welfare of the common man.

The Whig leadership was committed to restoring a financial system similar to the Bank of the United States. But Tyler desired a kind of “state-rights national bank,” one that would confine its operations to the District of Columbia and establish branches in the states only

with their consent. He twice vetoed bills for setting up what the Whigs tried to disguise as a "Fiscal Corporation."

Lacking a sufficient majority to override the veto, the Whigs fumed with rage at the President, who added to their anger by vetoing a number of internal improvement bills. In an unprecedented action, a conference of congressional Whigs read Tyler out of the party. All the cabinet members resigned except Webster, who had some diplomatic business with Great Britain that he wished to settle. To fill their places, the President appointed five men of his own stripe—former Democrats.

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#### WEBSTER'S DIPLOMACY

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added other territories—including overseas possessions such as Cuba and the Hawaiian Islands—if the expansionists had remained sufficiently united in their aims. But they came to be divided on the question of slavery in the new acquisitions.

Expansion arose from nationalism and ultimately was to strengthen it. But the immediate result was to endanger national unity, for expansion provoked and intensified sectional conflict. And because of this conflict the acquisition of an overseas empire was to be postponed for half a century.

The fruition of Manifest Destiny was not to come until after the election of 1844 had brought the Democrats back into power. Meanwhile, the Whigs found themselves divided and frustrated despite their overwhelming victory in the “log cabin” campaign of 1840, which had brought into office their appealing ticket of “Tippecanoe and Tyler too.”

“Old Tippecanoe,” William Henry Harrison, was never to have a chance to demonstrate what sort of President he would have made. Though he seemed to be in good health, he was sixty-eight years old in 1841, and the strain of the campaign and the inauguration and the pressing demands of his office-seeking supporters were apparently too much for him. He contracted a cold which turned into pneumonia, and he died on April 4, 1841, exactly one month after he had been inaugurated—the first President to die in office. In his brief presidential tenure he had looked for advice to the accepted leaders of the party, particularly to Clay and Webster. Webster became secretary of state, and four of Clay’s friends went into the cabinet. Clay and Webster had expected to guide the old soldier through the political jungle, but now Tippecanoe was dead. “Tyler too,” a practicing politician and a Southern Whig, was in the White House.

### **FRUSTRATION OF THE WHIGS**

Vice President John Tyler, though some contended he was merely the second officer acting as the first, immediately assumed the title as well as the powers of the presidency. For the time being, he kept Harrison’s cabinet. A member of an aristocratic Virginia family, Tyler had left the Democratic party in protest

against Jackson’s overly equalitarian program and imperious methods. One reason the Whigs had put him on the ticket with Harrison was the hope that he would attract the votes of similar conservative former Democrats. Nevertheless, Clay apparently had the impression that the new President would support a national bank and other Whig projects, but Tyler soon broke with Clay.

A part of Clay’s program was enacted without causing serious division in the party. With near unanimity the Whigs passed a measure, which Tyler signed, abolishing the Independent Treasury system. They also agreed on a bill, the Tariff of 1842, which raised the rates to approximately the same level as in 1832. Tyler accepted this bill, too, but with no great show of enthusiasm.

Part of the Whig legislative program made a bid for the approval of Western settlers and farmers. The frontier was continuing its steady expansion. Arkansas became a state in 1836, Michigan in 1837, and Florida in 1845. The greatest rush of settlers was into the future states of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. To attract Western voters the Whig leadership put through the Preemption Act of 1841, which made it possible for a man to claim 160 acres of land before they were offered publicly for sale and to pay for them later at \$1.25 an acre. This “log cabin bill” was hailed by the Whigs as a relief measure for sufferers from the depression and as a proof of their party’s devotion to the welfare of the common man.

The Whig leadership was committed to restoring a financial system similar to the Bank of the United States. But Tyler desired a kind of “state-rights national bank,” one that would confine its operations to the District of Columbia and establish branches in the states only

with their consent. He twice vetoed bills for setting up what the Whigs tried to disguise as a "Fiscal Corporation."

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Webster protested, England refused to return the slaves. Many Americans, especially Southerners, were infuriated.

At this critical juncture a new government came to power in Great Britain, one that was more disposed to conciliate the United States and to settle the outstanding differences between the two countries. The new ministry sent to America an emissary, Lord Ashburton, to negotiate an agreement on the Maine boundary and other matters. Ashburton liked Americans, and Webster admired the English. To avoid war, both were willing to compromise. The result of their deliberations was the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of August 9, 1842.

By the terms of this arrangement, the United States received about seven-twelfths of the disputed area, which was about as much as it could expect. Minor rectifications in the boundary were made in the Lake Champlain area and from Lake Superior to the Lake of the Woods. The boundary was now established as far west as the Rocky Mountains. Other issues disposed of were the extradition of criminals and the slave trade. Seven crimes were listed for which the United States and Canada would extradite accused citizens of the other country. It was agreed that both Great Britain and the United States would maintain naval squadrons off the African coast, the American ships being charged with chasing slavers using the American flag.

Through exchanges of notes that were not

part of the treaty, Webster and Ashburton also eased the memory of the *Caroline* and *Creole* affairs. Ashburton expressed "regret" for the raid on the *Caroline*, and he pledged that in the future there would be no "official interference" with American ships forced by "violence or accident" to enter British ports—presumably meaning there would be no repetition of the *Creole* episode.

Webster used secret funds to inspire newspaper propaganda favorable to his arrangements with Ashburton, and the treaty proved quite popular. War talk was forgotten for a time, as Anglo-American relations suddenly looked better than they had for many years.

During the Tyler administration the United States established diplomatic relations with China. In 1842 Britain forced China to open certain ports to foreign trade. Eager to share the new privileges, American mercantile interests persuaded Tyler and Congress to send a commissioner to China to negotiate a trade treaty. Webster wrote the instructions for the first commissioner, Caleb Cushing. In the Treaty of Wanghia, concluded in 1844, Cushing secured most-favored-nation provisions giving Americans the same privileges as Englishmen. He also persuaded the Chinese to grant Americans the right of extraterritoriality—the right, if accused of crimes, to be tried by American officials rather than by Chinese judges. In the next ten years American trade with China steadily increased.

## **Polk and Expansion**

During the James K. Polk administration (1845–1849) over a million square miles of new territory came under American control, and the western boundary of the United States advanced from the Louisiana Purchase line to the Pacific Ocean. Well might the ordinary-looking little man from Tennessee feel proud of his work. No other President except Jefferson had acquired so much for his country.

### **ELECTION OF 1844**

In 1844 Henry Clay expected to be the Whig candidate, and Van Buren the Democratic nominee. Both wanted to avoid taking a stand on the annexation of Texas, because a stand, no matter on which side, was certain to lose some votes. Consequently, they issued separate statements, so similar in tone as to indicate

## Manifest Destiny [1845]

The phrase "manifest destiny" was put into circulation by a Jacksonian journalist John L. O'Sullivan (1813–1895) writing in the *Democratic Review*, of New York, in July 1845, and again in the *New York Morning News* in December of the same year. The essence of his idea is suggested by the following passages from his *Monroe News* editorial:

*Texas has been absorbed into the Union in the inevitable fulfillment of the general law which is rolling our population westward, the connexion of which with that ratio of growth in population which is destined within a hundred years to swell our numbers to the enormous population of two hundred and fifty millions (if not more), is too evident to leave us in doubt of the manifest design of Providence in regard to the occupation of this continent.*

*A population will soon be in actual occupation of California, over which it will be idle for Mexico to dream of dominion. They will necessarily become independent of the without agency of our government, without responsibility of our people—in the natural flow of events, the spontaneous working of principles, and the adaptation of the tendencies and will of the inhabitants to the elemental circumstances in the world, but the United States played*

previous consultation between the authors. They both favored annexation, but only with the consent of Mexico. Since this consent was most unlikely to be forthcoming, the statements had little or no meaning.

Clay's action did not harm his candidacy. The Whig convention nominated him unanimously, although the platform discreetly omitted any reference to Texas. But Van Buren had destroyed his chances with the Democrats, particularly with those from the South, who were enraged by his equivocal stand on annexation. The Democratic convention threw him aside, and nominated James K. Polk, a champion of expansion. The platform caught the prevailing mood in its key resolution: "that the re-occupation of Oregon and the re-annexation of Texas at the earliest practicable period are great American measures." The words "re-occupation" and "re-annexation" were intended to imply that, in taking Oregon and Texas, the United States would only be confirming its claim to territories that had already belonged to it. By combining Oregon and Texas, the Democrats hoped to appeal to both Northern and Southern expansionists.

Too late Clay realized that he had muffed the expansion issue. In mid-campaign he announced that under certain circumstances he might be for the acquisition of Texas. His tardy straddling probably cost him more votes than it

gained. Polk carried the election by 170 electoral votes to 105, though his popular majority was less than 40,000. The Liberty party, running James G. Birney a second time, polled 62,000 votes (as compared with 7,000 in 1840), most of which were cast by Whigs who turned against Clay.

"Who is James K. Polk?" the Whigs had sarcastically asked during the campaign. Actually, he was not so obscure as all that. Born in North Carolina, he had moved, when in his mid-twenties, to Tennessee, thus following the pattern of the man who became his political mentor, Andrew Jackson. Elected to the national House of Representatives, he held his seat for fourteen consecutive years, serving for four of them as Speaker. He was thin, worn, even grim-looking, and his public manners comported with his appearance. But he had a good mind, he worked hard at his job, and above all he had an iron, implacable will. Probably no other President entered office with so clearly defined a program and accomplished so much of it as did Polk.

## PARTITIONING OF OREGON

The ownership of Oregon was long in dispute but its boundaries were clearly defined—on the north the latitude line of 54° 40', on the east

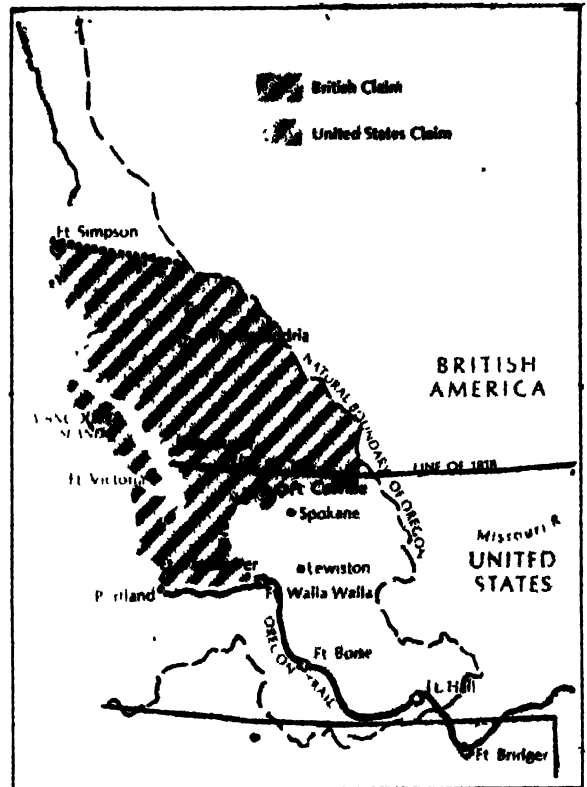
the crest of the Rocky Mountains, on the south the 42nd parallel, and on the west the Pacific Ocean. Included in its half-million square miles were the present states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, parts of Montana and Wyoming, and half of British Columbia.

At various times in the past the Oregon country had been claimed by Spain, Russia, France, England, and the United States. By the 1820s only the last two nations remained in contention. The others had withdrawn and surrendered their rights to Britain or to the United States or to both. The American and British claims were equally valid—or invalid. Both countries could assert title on the basis of the activities of their explorers, maritime traders, and fur traders. The English had one solid advantage: they were in actual possession of a part of the area. In 1821 the powerful British fur trading organization, the Hudson's Bay Company, under the leadership of its factor, John McLoughlin, established a post at Fort Vancouver, north of the Columbia River.

Several times the English government proposed the Columbia as a suitable line of division. The United States, also showing a desire to compromise, countered by suggesting the 49th parallel. This difference in official views prevented a settlement of the Oregon question in the Treaty of 1818. Unable to agree on a demarcation line, the diplomats of the two powers negotiated a compact whereby the citizens of each were to have equal access to Oregon for ten years. This arrangement, called joint occupation, was renewed in 1827 for an indefinite period, with either nation empowered to end it on a year's notice.

The first real American interest in Oregon came as a result of the activities of missionaries, notably Jason Lee, Marcus Whitman, and Father Pierre Jean de Smet. All the missionaries located their posts east or south of the Columbia River, mostly in the fertile Willamette Valley. They described their work in reports and letters that were published in influential religious journals and widely reprinted in secular newspapers. These reports dwelt as much on the rich soil and lovely climate of Oregon as on the spiritual condition of the Indians.

Beginning in 1841, thousands of pioneers set out for Oregon. Amazed observers remarked upon the "Oregon fever." Two thousand miles in length, the Oregon Trail penetrat-



American Expansion in Oregon

ed Indian country and crossed mountains and semidesert regions. To the emigrants, traveling in caravans of covered wagons and accompanied by huge herds of cattle, it presented enormous problems in transportation. The average period required for the journey was from May to November. Some never lived to complete it. But the great majority got through. By 1845, 5,000 Americans were living south of the Columbia—and demanding that their government take possession of Oregon.

When Polk assumed office, though in his inaugural address he seemed to reassert American title to all of Oregon, he was in reality willing to compromise—to effect a division on the line of the 49th parallel. The British minister in Washington rejected Polk's offer without referring it to London.

Abruptly Polk took a more militant attitude. Saying America should look John Bull



"straight in the eye" and hinting at war, he asserted claim to all of Oregon. In his annual message to Congress, in December 1845, he asked leave to give notice to England that joint occupation would end in a year. The United States, he said, would not permit further European colonization. This was a restatement of the Monroe Doctrine, which had been largely forgotten since 1823. Congress, with some Whigs dissenting, complied with the President's request.

Though there was loose talk of war on both sides of the Atlantic, neither nation really wished to resort to force. The British government now offered to divide Oregon at the 49th parallel—that is, to accept Polk's original proposal. The President affected to believe the offer should be rejected, but he was easily persuaded by his cabinet to submit it to the Senate for advice. Probably he was relieved to shift the responsibility for making a decision to the senators. They accepted the proposed agreement, and on June 15, 1846, a treaty was signed fixing the boundary at the 49th parallel. The United States had secured the larger and better part of the Oregon country and certainly all that it could have legitimately expected to get.

## ANNEXATION OF TEXAS

Southwest of the United States stretched the northern provinces of Mexico—Texas, New Mexico, and Upper California—once parts of Spain's colonial empire in North America but, since 1822, states in the independent republic of Mexico. Under Spanish rule the provinces had been subject to only the lightest supervision from the government of the viceroyalty in Mexico, and only a few thousand white men had settled in them. The same conditions prevailed under the republic, which lacked the power and the population to govern and settle such distant areas. At one time the United States had advanced a claim to Texas as a part of the Louisiana Purchase, but had renounced the claim in 1819. Twice thereafter, however, in the presidencies of John Quincy Adams and Jackson, the United States had offered to buy Texas, only to meet with indignant Mexican refusals.

The Mexican government invited the inevitable in Texas. In the early 1820s it encouraged

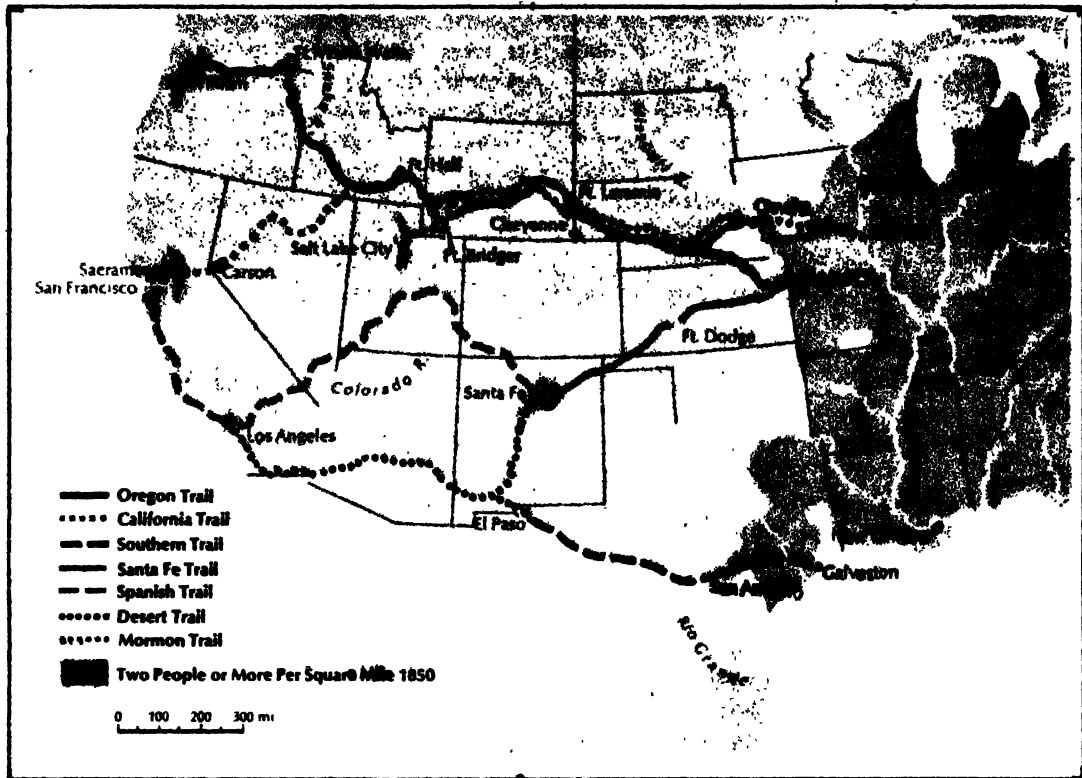
American immigration by offering land grants to men like Stephen Austin who promised to colonize the land. Probably the motive of the government was to build up the economy of Texas, and hence its tax revenues, by increasing the population with foreigners, but the experiment was to result in the loss of Texas to the United States. Thousands of Americans, attracted by reports of the rich soil in Texas, took advantage of Mexico's welcome. The great majority, by the very fact of geography, came from the Southern states, sometimes bringing with them slaves. By 1835 approximately 35,000 Americans were living in Texas.

Almost from the beginning there was friction between the settlers and both the Mexicans and the Mexican government. Finally the Mexican government, realizing that its power over Texas was being challenged by the settlers, moved to exert control. A new law reduced the powers of the various states of the republic, a measure that the Texans took to be aimed specifically at them. In 1836 the Texans proclaimed their independence.

The Mexican dictator, Santa Anna, advanced into Texas with a large army. Even with the aid of volunteers, money, and supplies from private groups in the United States, the Texans were having difficulty in organizing a resistance. Their garrison at the Alamo mission in San Antonio was exterminated; another at Goliad suffered substantially the same fate when the Mexicans murdered most of the force after it surrendered. But General Sam Houston, emerging as the national hero of Texas, kept a small army together, and at the battle of San Jacinto (April 21, 1836, near present-day Houston) he defeated the Mexican army and took Santa Anna prisoner. Although the Mexican government refused to recognize the captured dictator's vague promises to withdraw Mexican authority from Texas, it made no further attempts to subdue the province. Texas had won its independence.

The new republic desired to join the United States and through its president, Sam Houston, asked for recognition, to be followed by annexation. Though President Andrew Jackson favored annexation, he proceeded cautiously.

Abolitionism was beginning to make its influence felt in politics. Many Northerners expressed a conviction that it would be im-



### Western Trails

moral to extend the dominion of slavery. Others were opposed to incorporating a region that would add to Southern votes in Congress and in the electoral college. Jackson feared that annexation might cause an ugly sectional controversy and bring on a war with Mexico. He did not, therefore, propose annexation and did not even extend recognition to Texas until just before he left office in 1837. His successor, Van Buren, also refrained, for similar reasons, from pressing the issue.

Refused by the United States, Texas sought recognition, support, and money in Europe. Her leaders talked about creating a vast southwestern nation, stretching to the Pacific, which would be a rival to the United States. It was the kind of talk that Europe, particularly England, was charmed to hear. An independent Texas would be a counterbalance to the United States and a barrier to further American expansion; it would supply cotton for European industry and provide a market for

European exports. England and France hastened to recognize Texas and to conclude trade treaties with her. The English government played with the idea of guaranteeing Texan independence. President Tyler, eager to increase Southern power, persuaded Texas to apply again, and Secretary of State Calhoun submitted an annexation treaty to the Senate in April 1844. Unfortunately for Texas, Calhoun presented annexation as if its only purpose were to extend and protect slavery. The treaty was soundly defeated.

President Tyler, who remained in office until March 1845, viewed the election returns of 1844 as a mandate to carry annexation through. He proposed to Congress that Texas be annexed by a joint resolution of both houses, a device that would get around the necessity of obtaining a two-thirds majority in the Senate for a treaty. In February 1845, Congress voted to admit Texas to the Union. Conditions were affixed: Texas could be subdivided into not

more than four additional states; it had to pay its own public debts but was to retain its public lands; and it had to submit to the United States any boundary disputes in which it became involved. After Polk's inauguration Texas accepted the conditions. It became a state in December 1845.

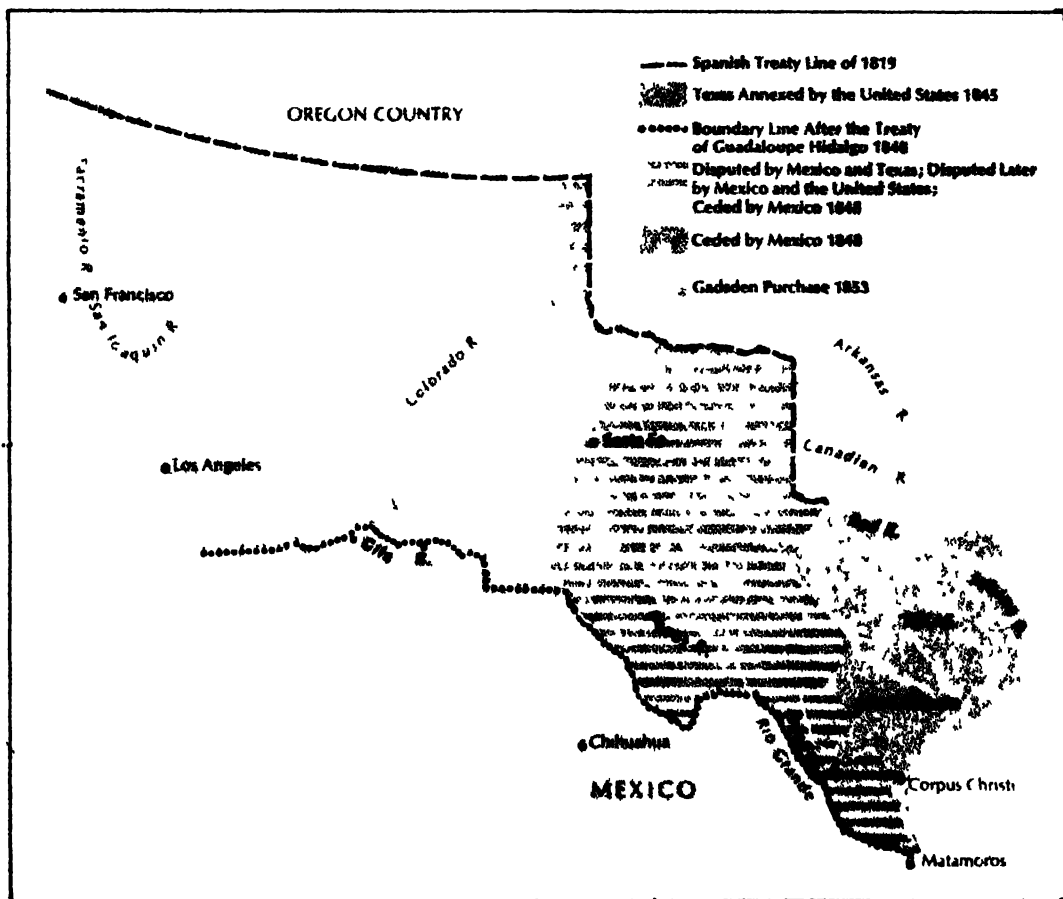
Promptly, the Mexican government broke diplomatic relations with the United States. To make matters worse, a dispute over Texas' boundary with Mexico now developed. The Texans claimed that the Rio Grande constituted the western and southern border, an assertion that would place much of what is now New Mexico in Texas. Mexico, while not formally conceding the loss of Texas, replied that the border had always been the Nueces River.

Polk recognized the Texan claim, and in the summer of 1845 he sent a small army under General Zachary Taylor to the Nueces line to protect Texas, he said, against the Mexicans.

### LANDS BEYOND TEXAS

New Mexico, another of Mexico's frontier provinces, supported a scanty population on a semi-primitive economy. Its small metropolis and trade center, Santa Fe, was 300 miles from the most northern settlements in Mexico. Under Spanish rule the New Mexicans had to export their few products over 1,000 miles to Mexico City and Vera Cruz and from these economic centers import their meager finished goods.

### American Expansion into the Southwest



When Mexico became independent, she let it be known that traders from the United States would be welcome in New Mexico.

An American, William Becknell, wagoned a load of merchandise to Santa Fe in 1821 and sold it at a high profit. Out of his success arose the famous and colorful "Santa Fe trade." Every year traders with a stock of manufactured goods gathered at Independence, Missouri, and traveled in an organized caravan over the Santa Fe Trail, more than 800 miles long. The merchants brought back gold, silver, furs, and mules. The Santa Fe trade opened up another route to the West and pointed another direction for expansion.

Even more distant from Mexico City and even freer from Mexican supervision was the third of the northern provinces, California. In this vast, rich region lived perhaps 7,000 Mexicans, descendants of Spanish colonists, who engaged in agricultural pursuits, chiefly ranching, lived lives of primitive plenty, and carried on a skimpy trade with the outside world.

The first Americans to enter California were maritime traders and captains of the Pacific whaling ships, who stopped to barter goods or acquire supplies. Following them came merchants, who established stores, imported merchandise, and conducted a profitable trade with the Mexicans and Indians. Thomas O. Larkin, who set up business in Monterey in 1832, soon attained the status of a leading citizen. Although Larkin maintained close and friendly relations with the Mexican authorities, he secretly longed for the day when California would become an American possession. In 1844-1845 he accepted an appointment as United States consul, with instructions to arouse sentiment among the Californians for annexation.

As reports spread of the rich soil and mild climate, immigrants began to enter California from the east by land. These were pioneering farmers, men of the type who were penetrating Texas and Oregon in search of greener pastures. By 1845 there were 700 Americans in California, most of them concentrated in the valley of the Sacramento River. The overlord of this region was John A. Sutter, once of Germany and Switzerland, who had moved to California in 1839 and had become a Mexican citizen. His headquarters at Sutter's Fort was the center of a magnificent domain where the

owner ranched thousands of cattle and horses and maintained a network of small manufacturing shops to supply his armed retainers.

President Polk feared that Great Britain wanted to acquire or dominate California as well as Texas—a suspicion that was given credence by the activities of British diplomatic agents in the province. His dreams of expansion went beyond the Democratic platform. He was determined to acquire for his country New Mexico and California and possibly other parts of northern Mexico.

At the same time that he sent Taylor to the Nueces, Polk also sent secret instructions to the commander of the Pacific naval squadron to seize the California ports if he heard that Mexico had declared war. A little later Consul Larkin was informed that, if the people wanted to revolt and join the United States, they would be received as brethren. Still later an exploring expedition led by Captain John C. Frémont, of the army's corps of topographical engineers, entered California. The Mexican authorities, alarmed by the size of the party and its military aspects, ordered Frémont to leave. He complied, but moved only over the Oregon border.

After preparing measures that looked like war, Polk resolved on a last effort to achieve his objectives by diplomacy. He dispatched to Mexico a special minister, John Slidell, a Louisiana politician, with instructions to settle with American money all the questions in dispute between the two nations. If Mexico would acknowledge the Rio Grande boundary for Texas, the United States would assume the damage claims, amounting to several millions, which Americans held against Mexico. If she would cede New Mexico, the United States would pay \$5 million. And for California, the United States would pay up to \$25 million. Slidell soon notified his government that his mission had failed. Immediately after receiving Slidell's information, on January 13, 1846, Polk ordered Taylor's army to move across the Nueces to the Rio Grande.

If Polk was hoping for trouble, he was disappointed for months. Finally, in May, he decided to ask Congress to declare war on the grounds that Mexico had refused to honor its financial obligations and had insulted the United States by rejecting the Slidell mission. While Polk was working on a war message, the news arrived from Taylor that Mexican troops

had crossed the Rio Grande and attacked a unit of American soldiers. Polk now revised his message. He declared: "Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States . . . and shed American blood upon the American soil" — "war exists by the act of Mexico herself." Congress accepted Polk's interpretation of events and on May 13, 1846, declared war by votes of 40 to 2 in the Senate and 174 to 14 in the House.

Although Congress had accepted war with near unanimity, there was more opposition than appeared on the surface. Opposition increased and intensified as the war continued and costs and casualties came home to the people. The Whigs in Congress supported the military appropriation bills, but they became ever bolder and more bitter in denouncing "Mr. Polk's war" as aggressive in origin and objectives.

## WAR WITH MEXICO

In the opening phases of the war President Polk assumed the planning of grand strategy, a practice that he continued almost to the end of the war. His basic idea was to seize key areas on the Mexican frontier and then force the Mexicans to make peace on American terms. Accordingly, he ordered Taylor to cross the Rio Grande and occupy northeastern Mexico, taking as his first objective the city of Monterrey. Polk seems to have had a vague idea that from Monterrey Taylor could advance southward, if necessary, and menace Mexico City. Taylor, "Old Rough and Ready," beloved by his soldiers for his courage and easy informality but ignorant of many technical aspects of war, attacked Monterrey in September 1846. After a hard fight he captured it, but at the price of agreeing to let the garrison evacuate without pursuit. Although the country hailed Taylor as a hero, Polk concluded that he did not possess the ability to lead an offensive against Mexico City. Also, Polk began to realize that an advance south through the mountains would involve impossible problems of supply.

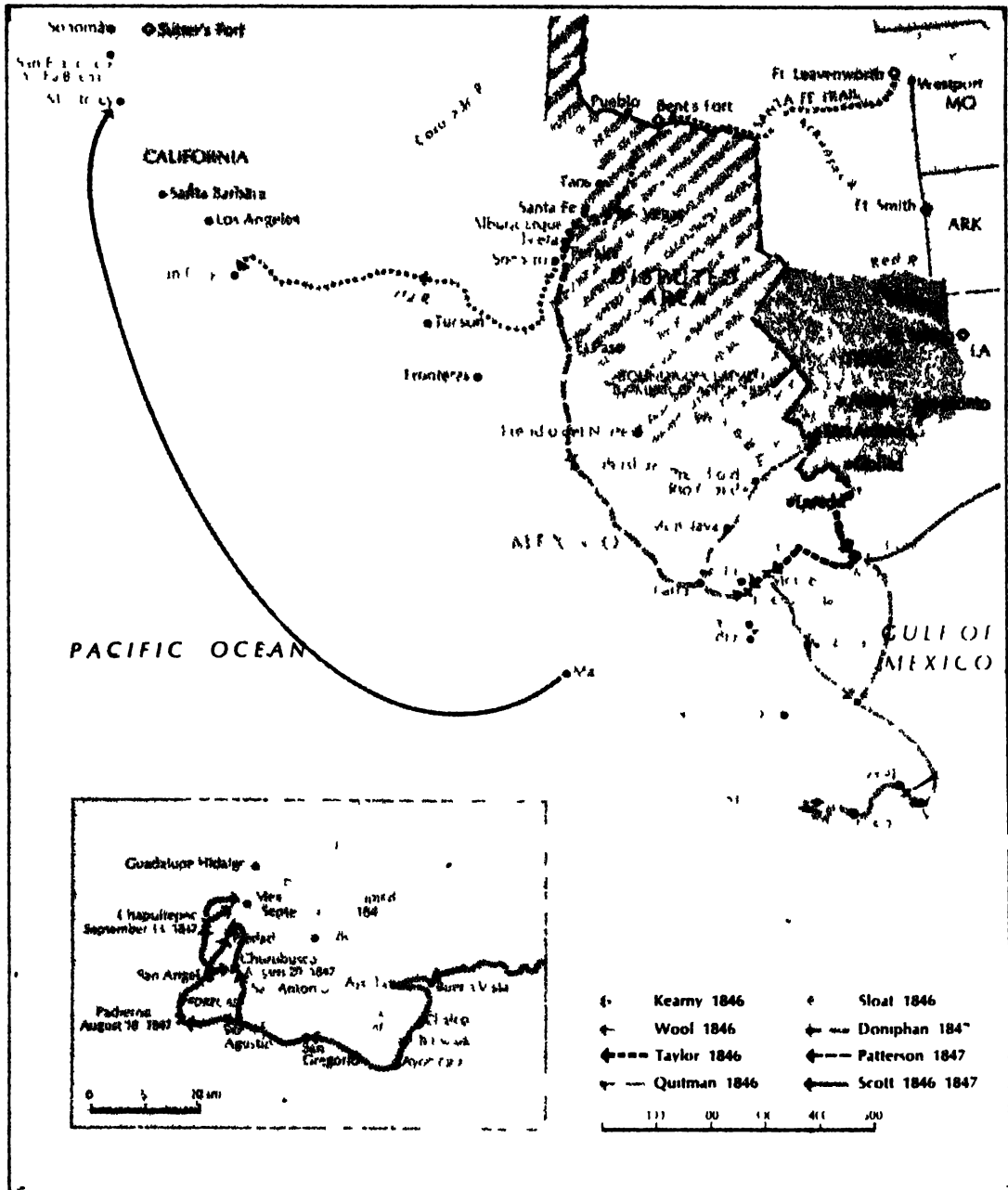
Two other offensives planned by Polk were aimed at New Mexico and California. In the summer of 1846 a small army under Colonel Stephen W. Kearny made the long march to Santa Fe and occupied the town with no opposition. Kearny sent part of his army (Missouri

volunteers under Colonel A. W. Doniphan) south to join Taylor, and disposed other parts to garrison the province. Then, acting under instructions from Polk, Kearny proceeded with a few hundred troopers to California to take charge of operations there. In California a combined revolt and war was being staged by the settlers, Frémont's exploring party, and the American navy. The settlers had proclaimed California an independent state in the "Bear Flag Revolution." Frémont had returned from Oregon to lead the rebels, and the navy had landed forces and annexed California to the United States. When Kearny arrived, the Americans were fighting under the direction of Commodore R. F. Stockton of the navy. With some difficulty, Kearny brought the disparate American elements under his command, and by the autumn of 1846 completed the conquest of California.

In addition to northeastern Mexico, the United States now had possession of the two provinces for which it had gone to war. In a sense, the objectives of the war had been achieved. The only trouble was that Mexico refused to recognize realities; she would not agree to a peace and cede the desired territory. At this point Polk turned to General Scott, the commanding general of the army and its finest soldier, for help.

Together Polk and Scott devised a plan to force the Mexicans to accept peace. Scott would assemble at Tampico an army to be made up partly of troops from Taylor's army and partly of forces from other areas. The navy would transport this army down the coast to Vera Cruz, which would be seized and made into a base. From Vera Cruz, Scott would move west along the National Highway to Mexico City. Late in 1846 Scott went to Mexico to organize his forces. Taylor, who lost about half of his army to Scott, was instructed to stand on the defensive.

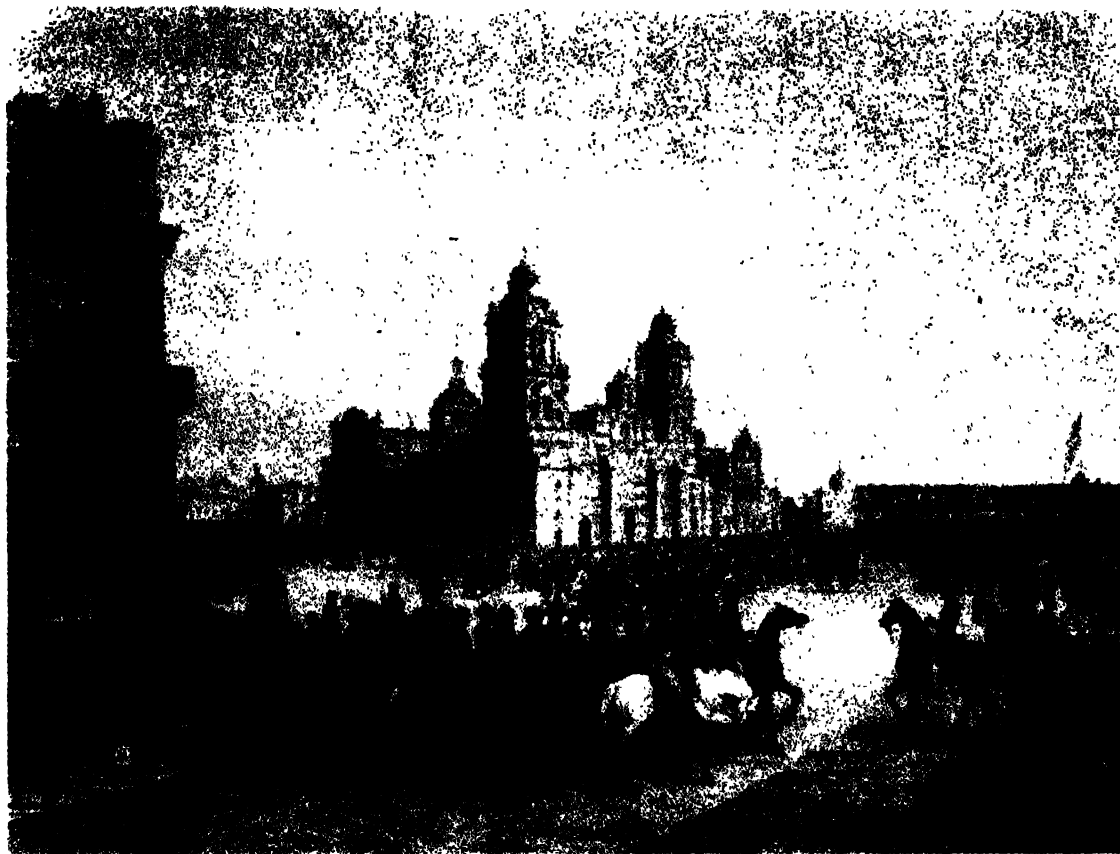
While Scott was assembling his army off the coast, General Santa Anna, the Mexican dictator, decided to take advantage of the division of American forces by marching northward and crushing Taylor and then returning to deal with Scott. With an army much larger than Taylor's, Santa Anna attacked the Americans at Buena Vista (February 1847). Santa Anna could not break the American line and had to return to defend Mexico City.



### The Mexican War 1846-1848

In the meantime Scott had taken Vera Cruz by siege and was moving inland in one of the most brilliant campaigns in American military annals. With an army that never numbered

more than 14,000, he advanced 260 miles into enemy territory, conserved the lives of his soldiers by using flanking movements instead of frontal assaults, and finally achieved his objec-



**Entrance of Scott's Army into Mexico City**

*This print of the American army taking possession of the Mexican capital in 1847 appeared in a history of the war written by George W. Kendall of the New Orleans Picayune. Kendall was one of the first war correspondents ever to accompany an army on its campaigns. (Library of Congress)*

tive without losing a battle. At Cerro Gordo, in the mountains, he inflicted a smashing reverse on the Mexicans. He met no further resistance until he was within a few miles of Mexico City. After capturing the fortress of Chapultepec in a hard fight, the Americans occupied the enemy capital. A new Mexican government came into power, one that recognized the fact of defeat and that was willing to make a peace treaty.

Polk, in his growing anxiety to get the war finished, had sent with the invading army a presidential agent who was authorized to negotiate an agreement. On February 2, 1848, the agent concluded the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Mexico agreed to cede California and New Mexico and to acknowledge the Rio

Grande boundary of Texas. In return, the United States contracted to assume the claims of its citizens against Mexico and to pay \$15 million to Mexico.

Some expansionists in the United States were demanding that the government hold out for the annexation of all Mexico. This permitted the antislavery leaders to charge that Southern slaveholders were running the government for their own ends. (Actually, some antislavery men, convinced that slavery could never thrive in Mexico, favored taking the whole country.) Polk acted quickly to silence the extremists on both sides. He submitted the treaty to the Senate, and by a vote of 38 to 14, it was approved.

## **A New Sectional Crisis**

The Mexican War, with the vast territory it yielded, led directly to the most serious threat of disunion yet to confront the United States.

### **SETTLERS IN THE FAR WEST**

When the war ended, a portion of the territory acquired from Mexico was already settled by Americans who, oddly enough, had left their country because they were unhappy there. These people were adherents of a religious sect formally known as the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" and more commonly known as Mormons. The Mormon faith, one of the numerous new religions that flowered in America in the 1820s and 1830s, had originated in western New York. The Mormons believed in a tightly knit and disciplined community life directed by the church elders. Seeking a more congenial environment, under the leadership of their prophet, Joseph Smith, they moved to Ohio, then to Missouri, and finally to Nauvoo, Illinois. Everywhere they met with resentment, largely caused by their economic and community organization. At Nauvoo they particularly outraged the opinions of their neighbors by introducing polygamy. Their troubles came to a climax when a mob lynched Smith.

Smith's successor, Brigham Young, now decided that if the Mormons were to escape further persecution they would have to move outside the United States. In 1846 almost the entire Mormon community left Nauvoo. Their destination, picked out by Young, was the Great Salt Lake basin in Utah, so arid that no other people would have the courage to live there. By 1850 over 11,000 people were settled in and around the Mormon metropolis of Salt Lake City. With the aid of irrigation they made the desert bloom. They established thriving home industries, and they built up a profitable trade with emigrants on the way to California.

In January 1848, gold was accidentally discovered in the Sacramento Valley in California. As word of the strike spread, inhabitants of California and the whole Far West, fired by hopes of becoming immediate millionaires, stampeded to the area to stake out claims. By the end of summer the news had reached the Eastern

states and Europe. Then the gold rush really started. From the United States and all the world, thousands of "Forty-Niners" poured into California. Those who left from the older states could choose among three routes of travel: overland by covered wagon, inexpensive but involving a long journey over the Great Plains and across the Rockies; by ship around Cape Horn, quicker but more expensive; or the dangerous, difficult shortcut across the Isthmus of Panama. By all three routes, disdaining hunger, thirst, disease, and even death, the seekers after gold came—more than 80,000 of them in 1849. By the end of that year, California had a population of approximately 100,000, more than enough to entitle her to statehood.

### **WARTIME AND POSTWAR POLITICS**

In domestic politics President Polk was as aggressive—and successful—as he was in foreign policy. At his insistence Congress reestablished the Independent Treasury system, thus pleasing all sections of the Democratic party and redeeming one of its platform promises. Again at his demand, Congress fulfilled another platform pledge by lowering the tariff. The Tariff of 1846 reduced the average rates enough to delight the South, but it could not have been passed without the votes of Northwestern Democrats.

Naturally, the Westerners expected something in return, and specifically they expected Southern support for internal improvements. Two internal improvements bills passed Congress, but Polk, who sincerely believed that the national government had no legal power to finance such projects, vetoed both of them. The Westerners were disappointed and angered. As in the case of Oregon, they thought that Polk was sacrificing their interests to those of the South.

Before Polk left office, a much more dangerous issue emerged. In August 1846, while the war was in progress, he had asked Congress to provide him with \$2 million that he could use to purchase peace with Mexico. When the appropriation was introduced in the House, David Wilmot of Pennsylvania, an anti-slavery Democrat from a high-tariff state,



**Mormon Leader**  
*Brigham Young was born in Vermont and grew up in western New York in an area known, because of the fiery religious revivals that swept across it, as the "burnt-over district." Here the Mormon faith originated, and here Young was converted to it. He quickly became a leader in the church and became its president on Smith's death in 1844. He led his people to Utah and on seeing the grim and forbidding Great Salt Lake basin, he exclaimed "This is the place." (Library of Congress)*



moved an amendment that slavery should be prohibited in any territory secured from Mexico. The so-called Wilmot Proviso passed the House but failed in the Senate. It would be called up again and be debated and voted on for years.

Diametrically opposed to the Wilmot Proviso was the formula of the Southern extremists. They contended that the states jointly owned the territories and that the citizens of each state possessed equal rights in them, including the right to move to them with their property, particularly slave property. According to this view, Congress, which was the only agent for the joint owners, had no power to prohibit the movement of slavery into the public domain or to regulate it in any way except by extending protection. Neither could a territorial legislature, which was a creature of Congress, take any action to ban slavery.

Two compromise plans were presented. One, which numbered President Polk among its advocates, proposed to run the Missouri Compromise line of 36° 30' through the new

territories to the Pacific coast, banning slavery north of the line and permitting it south. The other, first prominently espoused by Lewis Cass, Democratic senator from Michigan, was originally called "squatter sovereignty." Later, when taken up by Stephen A. Douglas, an Illinois senator of the same party, it was given the more dignified title of "popular sovereignty." According to this formula, the question of slavery in each territory should be left to the people there, acting through the medium of their territorial legislature.

Congress and the country debated the various formulas, but at the end of Polk's administration a decision had still not been reached. No territorial government had been provided for California or New Mexico (New Mexico included most of present New Mexico and Arizona, all of Utah and Nevada, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming). Even the organization of Oregon, so far north that obviously slavery would never enter it, was held up by the controversy. Southern members of Congress, hoping to gain some advantage in the

regions farther south, blocked a territorial bill for Oregon until August 1848, when a free-soil government was finally authorized.

The debate was partially stilled by the presidential campaign of 1848. Both the Democrats and the Whigs tried to avoid definite and provocative references to the slavery question. The Democrats nominated as their candidate Lewis Cass of Michigan, an elderly, honest, dull wheel horse of the party. Although the platform was purposely vague, it was capable of being interpreted as an endorsement of squatter sovereignty. The Whigs adopted no platform and presented as their candidate a military hero with no political record—General Zachary Taylor of Louisiana.

Ardent abolitionists and even moderates who merely opposed the expansion of slavery found it difficult to swallow either Cass or Taylor. The situation was ripe for the appearance of a third party. The potential sources for such a group were the existing Liberty party and the

antislavery members of the old organizations. Late in the campaign, third-party promoters held a national convention, adopted a platform endorsing the Wilmot Proviso, free homesteads, and a higher tariff, and nominated former President Van Buren for the presidency. Thus was launched the Free Soil party.

Taylor won a narrow victory. Though Van Buren failed to carry a single state, he polled an impressive 291,000 votes, and the Free-Soilers elected ten members to Congress. It is probable that Van Buren pulled enough Democratic votes away from Cass, particularly in New York, to throw the election to Taylor.

### **TAYLOR AND THE TERRITORIES**

Zachary Taylor was the first man to be elected President with no previous political training or experience. He was also the first professional soldier to sit in the White House. Though a

#### **Washing for Gold**

*These miners in a Western gold camp are engaging in placer mining. The gold found in the first strikes was located in the form of particles along stream beds. Prospectors separated the gold from sand or gravel by washing the deposit in a swirl of water. Washing was done in pans or boxes. From Samuel Bowles, Our New West.*



Southerner and a slaveholder, he had acquired a national outlook from his long years in the army.

Since Congress had failed to provide civil government for the area annexed from Mexico, those regions were being administered by military officials who were responsible to the President. The situation was unsatisfactory to everybody concerned with it. To President Taylor, statehood seemed to be the solution to California's problem and to the controversy over slavery in the territories. Let California and also New Mexico frame state constitutions and apply for admission to the Union. Once they had become states, nobody could deny their right to dispose of slavery as they wished. So Taylor directed military officials in the territories to expedite statehood movements.

California promptly ratified a constitution in which slavery was prohibited. When Congress assembled in December 1849, Taylor rather proudly described his efforts. He recommended that California be admitted as a free state and that New Mexico, when it was ready, be permitted to come in with complete freedom to decide the status of slavery as it wished. But Congress was not about to accept the President's program.

Complicating the situation was the emergence of side issues generated by the conflict over slavery in the territories. One such issue concerned slavery in the District of Columbia. Antislavery people, charging that human servitude in the capital was a national disgrace, demanded that it be abolished there. Southerners angrily replied that the institution could not be touched without the consent of Maryland, which had originally donated the land, and that to abolish it would place a stigma on the entire South.

Another disturbing question concerned the rendition of fugitive slaves. Northern "personal liberty laws," forbidding courts and police officers to assist in the return of runaways, provoked Southerners to call for a new, more stringent national fugitive slave law.

A third issue related to the boundary between Texas and New Mexico. Texas claimed the portion of New Mexico east of the Rio Grande, although the national government during the Mexican War had assigned this region to New Mexico. To Texans it seemed that Washington was trying to steal part of their ter-

ritory. They also resented the government's refusal to assume the Texas war debt. Southern extremists supported the pretensions of Texas, while Northerners, eager to cut down the size of a slave state, upheld New Mexico.

But the biggest obstacle in the way of the President's program was the South—angered and frightened by the possibility that two new free states would be added to the Northern majority. Only in the Senate did the South still maintain equality. The number of free and slave states was equal in 1849—fifteen of each. But now the admission of California would upset the balance, and New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah were yet to come.

Responsible Southern leaders declared that if California was to be admitted, and if slavery was to be prohibited in the territories, the time had come for the South to secede from the Union. At the suggestion of Mississippi, a call went out for a Southern-rights convention to meet in June 1850 at Nashville, Tennessee, to consider whether the South should resort to the ultimate act of secession. In the North excitement ran equally high. Every Northern state legislature but one adopted resolutions demanding that slavery be barred from the territories. Public meetings all through the free states called for the passage of the Wilmot Proviso and the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. Such was the crisis that confronted Congress and the country as the tense year of 1850 opened.

### THE COMPROMISE OF 1850

Moderates and lovers of the Union turned their thoughts, during the winter of 1849–1850, to the framing of a great congressional compromise that would satisfy both sections and restore tranquillity. The venerable statesman from Kentucky, Henry Clay, headed the forces of conciliation. To Clay's way of thinking, no compromise would have any lasting effect unless it settled all the issues in dispute between the sections. Accordingly, he took a number of separate measures, which had been proposed before, combined them into one set of resolutions, and on January 29, 1850, presented these to the Senate. He recommended (1) that California be admitted as a free state; (2) that, in the rest of the Mexican cession, territorial gov-

## **An Extreme Southern View on Compromise in 1850**

In his last speech Calhoun insisted that the North should either agree to everything that the South demanded as its rights or permit the minority section to depart the Union:

*It is time, Senators, that there should be an open and manly avowal on all sides, as to what is intended to be done. If the question is not now settled, it is uncertain whether it ever can hereafter be, and we, as the representatives of the States of this Union, regarded as governments, should come to a distinct understanding as to our respective views, in order to ascertain whether the great questions at issue can be settled or not. If you, who represent the stronger portion, cannot agree to settle them on the broad principle of justice and duty, say so; and let the States we both represent agree to separate and part in peace, tell us so; and we shall know what to do, when you reduce the question to submission or resistance. If you remain silent, you will compel us to infer by your acts what you intend.*

ernments be formed without restrictions as to slavery; (3) that Texas yield in her boundary dispute with New Mexico and be compensated by the federal government's taking over her public debt; (4) that the slave trade, but not slavery itself, be abolished in the District of Columbia; and (5) that a new and more effective fugitive slave law be passed.

These resolutions started a debate that raged for months in Congress and throughout the country. Clay himself opened the oratorical tournament with a defense of his measures and a plea to North and South to be mutually conciliatory and forbearing.

Early in March, Calhoun, who had less than a month to live, presented the views of the Southern extremists. Too ill to speak, he sat grimly in his seat while a colleague read his speech. Almost ignoring Clay's proposals, he devoted his argument to what to him was the larger and the only subject—the minority South—and he asked more for his section than could be given. Because of Northern aggressions, the cords that bound the Union were snapping, he said. What would save the Union? The North must admit that the South possessed equal rights in the territories, must agree to observe the laws concerning fugitive slaves, must cease attacking slavery, and must accept an amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing a balance of power between the sections. The amendment he had in mind provided for the election of dual Presidents, one from the North and one from the South, each possessing a veto power: In short, nothing would satisfy Calhoun except abject surrender by the North.

After Calhoun came the third of the elder statesmen, Webster. His "Seventh of March address" was probably the greatest forensic effort of his long oratorical career. Still nourishing White House ambitions, he now sought to calm angry passions and to rally Northern moderates to support Clay's compromise. The voice of the Northern extremists was the New York Whig William H. Seward, who maintained extremely cordial personal relations with President Taylor. There was a higher law than the Constitution, Seward proclaimed, the law of God, which required men to oppose slavery.

Popular sentiment in all sections was slowly swinging in favor of some kind of compromise. The country was entering upon a period of prosperity—the result of an expanding foreign trade, the flow of gold from California, and a boom in railroad construction—reminiscent of the flush days of the 1830s. Conservative economic interests everywhere wanted to terminate the sectional dispute and concentrate the attention of the nation upon internal expansion. Even in the South excitement seemed to be abating. The Nashville convention met in June, and after adopting some tame resolutions, adjourned to await final action by Congress.

For a time, however, it seemed that Congress was not going to act. One reason was the opposition of Taylor. The President persisted in his stand that the admission of California, and possibly New Mexico, must come first. After that, it might be possible to discuss other measures. In the meantime, if the South want-

## An Extreme Northern View on Compromise in 1850

William H. Seward, Senator from New York expressed the feelings of those Northerners who refused to make any further concessions to the South in 1850:

*I AM OPPOSED TO ANY SUCH COMPROMISE, IN ANY AND ALL THE FORMS IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN PROPOSED. Because, while admitting the purity and the patriotism of all from whom it is my misfortune to differ, I think all legislative compromises radically wrong and essentially vicious. They involve the surrender of the exercise of judgment and conscience on distinct and separate questions, at distinct and separate times, with the indispensable advantages it affords for ascertaining truth. They involve a relinquishment of the right to reconsider in future the decisions of the present, on questions prematurely anticipated. And they are a usurpation as to future questions of the province of future legislators.*

ed to try anything like secession, "Old Zack" was ready to use force against his native section and to lead the armed forces in person.

On July 9, President Taylor suddenly died, the victim of a violent stomach disorder following an attack of heat prostration. He was succeeded by the Vice President, Millard Fillmore of New York. The new chief executive was a handsome, dignified man of no great abilities, but he was also a practical politician who understood the importance of give and take. He ranged himself on the side of the Compromise, using his powers of persuasion and patronage to swing Northern Whigs into line. Clay, exhausted by his labors, temporarily left Congress, and Stephen A. Douglas took over the leadership of the Compromise forces. Douglas broke up Clay's "omnibus bill" into separate measures and presented them one by one. By mid-September, all had been enacted by both houses of Congress and signed by the President.

It was one thing to pass the Compromise through Congress and another to persuade the country to accept it. In the North the most objectionable of the measures was the Fugitive

Slave Act. By this law, a Negro accused of being a runaway was denied trial by jury and the right to testify in his own behalf. His status was to be decided by a federal judge or by a special commissioner appointed by the federal circuit courts. He could be remanded to slavery on the bare evidence of an affidavit presented by the man who claimed to be his owner.

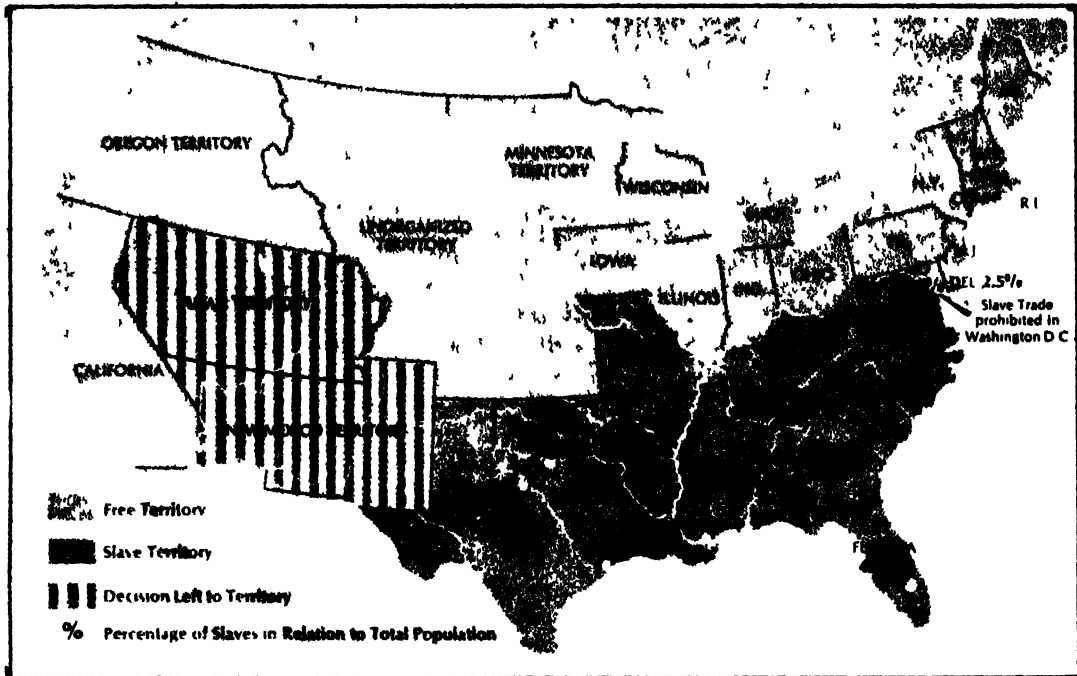
But the Fugitive Slave Act was the only part of the Compromise that most Southerners could approve. The adjourned session of the Nashville convention met in November 1850 (with only about a third of the original delegates present) and condemned the Compromise. Eventually, the South brought itself to accept the settlement, but only after much agonizing, and then only conditionally. Epitomizing the feelings of its people was the "Georgia Platform." This declared that Georgia would acquiesce in the Compromise—but if the North disregarded the Fugitive Slave Act, or attempted to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, or denied admission to a state because it wished to have slavery, then Georgia would consider the compact broken and would protect its rights even to the point of seceding.

## An Uneasy Truce

The Compromise of 1850 proved to be only a truce, and a short and uneasy one at that. During the next few years the sectional conflict continued to smolder. It was reflected in both domestic politics and foreign policy.

### RENEWED AGITATION

At their national convention in 1852 the Democrats adopted a platform pledging their unswerving devotion to the Compromise of 1850



**Slave and Free Territory 1850**

and their united opposition to all attempts in any "shape or color" to renew the agitation of the slavery question. Not so unanimous when it came to choosing a candidate, they wrangled through forty-nine ballots, with no one of the leading contenders—Cass, Douglas, or James Buchanan of Pennsylvania—being able to secure a two-thirds majority. Finally, the prize went to one of the more obscure aspirants, a "dark horse," Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire. The Whigs likewise endorsed the Compromise but in much milder terms and over the opposition of many antislavery, or "Conscience," Whigs. Instead of nominating a man connected with and committed to the Compromise, they named, after fifty-three ballots, General Winfield Scott, whose views were unknown and whose support by Northern delegates made him suspect to Southerners even though he was a Virginian. He was to be the last Whig candidate. Only the Free-Soilers, with John P. Hale of New Hampshire as their candidate, repudiated the Compromise.

Probably because the Democrats had taken the strongest stand in favor of the Compro-

mise, they won at the polls. When Franklin Pierce was inaugurated in 1853, he was, at the age of forty-nine, the youngest man up to that time to become President. Amiable and charming, he had been selected as the Democratic nominee largely for reasons of party harmony. In his short political career he had upheld few opinions and made few enemies. As President, he was dominated by the strong men of his cabinet, especially Secretary of State William L. Marcy of New York and Secretary of War Jefferson Davis of Mississippi.

The Compromise did not dissolve the abolitionist organizations nor stop their crusade to convince the Northern masses that slavery was a sin. In the 1850s the abolitionists found new allies and more effective media of expression. Several Free-Soilers now sat in Congress, and these men—such as Charles Sumner of Massachusetts in the Senate and Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio in the House—could denounce slavery from the vantage point of the national forum.

Northern hostility to the new Fugitive Slave Act was intensified when Southerners appeared in the Northern states to pursue fugi-

tives or to claim as slaves Negroes who had been living for years in Northern communities. Mobs attempted to impede enforcement of the law. In 1851 a crowd in Boston took from a federal marshal a runaway named Shadrach and sent him on his way to Canada. Later in the same year at Syracuse, New York, there was a similar rescue of a slave named Jerry McHenry. In 1854 a Boston mob led by respectable and prominent men tried unsuccessfully to take Anthony Burns from the custody of federal officers.

These displays of violence alarmed the South, and so did the new personal-liberty laws passed by several Northern legislatures. The frank purpose of the statutes was to render the Fugitive Slave Act a nullity. They interposed state power between the accused fugitive and the federal authority. In Wisconsin and Massachusetts, state courts were instructed to issue writs of habeas corpus (requiring an appearance before a judge) against any person detaining a fugitive and to grant the fugitive a judicial hearing in which the burden of proof was placed on the pursuer. The supreme court of Wisconsin, in the case of *Ableman v. Booth* (1857), declared the national law void. When the Supreme Court of the nation decided against the state, the Wisconsin court ignored the decision. Thus legal and judicial barriers were being thrown in the way of the one provision of the Compromise that the South considered a positive victory, and Southerners were deeply angered.

### "YOUNG AMERICA"

In Europe the great liberal and nationalist revolutions of 1848 were running their course, some succeeding, others petering out in failure. A vision of a republican Europe, with governments to be based on the model of the United States, stirred the American imagination. A group of Democrats started a "Young America" movement with vague ideas of aiding revolutionaries abroad. These adventurous Democrats also aimed to promote American commerce in the Pacific and elsewhere and to extend the sweep of Manifest Destiny with new acquisitions in this hemisphere. Other politicians in both parties caught the "Young America" spirit, and it influenced the foreign policies

of both the Fillmore and the Pierce administrations. At first these aggressive policies abroad were intended to offset the divisive, sectional feelings at home. Before long, however, the interest in additional territories complicated the relations between the sections as well as the relations between the United States and foreign governments.

The Whig Daniel Webster, secretary of state a second time, under Fillmore, saw a chance to play upon the national pride when the Austrian representative in Washington protested against the apparent readiness of the United States to recognize the independence of the Hungarians, who were revolting against Austrian rule. In reply, Webster dismissed the protest and added the gratuitous observation that, in comparison with the vast extent of the United States, the domain of Austria was "but as a patch on the earth's surface." And when (after the collapse of the Hungarian revolt) the rebel leader Louis Kossuth visited the United States, Webster joined in Kossuth's enthusiastic reception by speaking at a banquet in his honor.

Showing concern for Pacific commerce, the Fillmore administration sent out an expedition under Commodore Matthew C. Perry to open trade relations with Japan, which for two centuries had been a hermit nation. Perry touched at Japan in 1853 and reappeared there the following year with an impressive display of naval might. He obtained a treaty opening two ports and providing for the residence of an American consul in one of them. The first consul, Townsend Harris, after years of patient labor, secured a new treaty (1858) with additional trading rights.

The Fillmore administration was cautious about American schemes for taking Cuba, the rich "pearl of the Antilles," which Polk once had tried to purchase from Spain. Later a Venezuelan adventurer, General Narciso López, proposed to conquer the island with a force of American volunteers and present it to the United States. On his third attempt, in 1851, López landed in Cuba with about 400 men, mostly Americans, but ran into a much stronger army of Spaniards. They defeated and captured him and most of his followers, then executed him and more than fifty others. While a retaliating mob wrecked the Spanish consulate in New Orleans, the governments of Great





**"The Land of Liberty"**

*A British view of the United States. Americans are committing aggression in Mexico after taking Texas and Oregon and are dueling, engaging in drunken brawls, repudiating their state debts and thus robbing foreigners, and enslaving and lynching blacks while preoccupying themselves with money and trampling on their own Revolutionary ideals. From an 1847 issue of the British humor magazine Punch.*

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Britain and France took alarm at the American filibustering. They proposed that the United States join them in a tripartite agreement guaranteeing Cuba to Spain. Edward Everett, Webster's successor as secretary of state, declined the proposal. He explained that his government could make no pledge never to acquire Cuba, since the island, so close by, was of immense strategic importance to the United States and someday "might be almost essential to our safety."

The Pierce administration, though more aggressive, was frustrated in its expansionist hopes because of sectional jealousies. Schemes to get new slave territories aroused opposition in the North, and the acquisition of lands unsuited to slavery was unpopular in the South. Though the kingdom of Hawaii agreed to join the United States (1854), the annexation treaty had no chance for Senate approval, since it contained a clause prohibiting slavery.

The old idea of adding Canada to the United States had never died out among Americans, and it was beginning to appeal to more and more Canadians. Some of them saw a union as the only way out of their economic difficulties. As a result of British free-trade policy (after 1846) and the American tariff, Canadians had lost much of their export trade. Annexation would open the American market to them. To deal with Canada's economic problem, and to settle a revived quarrel over American fishing rights along the Newfoundland and Labrador coasts, the British government sent Lord Elgin on a special mission to Washington in 1854. Lord Elgin and Secretary of State William L. Marcy negotiated a treaty specifying fishing rights and providing for tariff reciprocity. Canada was to accept certain American commodities, and the United States certain Canadian commodities, duty free. Thus Canadians, without annexation, would have access to American markets. The Elgin Treaty was promptly rati-

fied. A Vermont senator explained that many of his fellow senators, those from the South, had been in a hurry to head off the union movement.

Central America had attracted attention for several years, ever since the California gold rush, when many gold-seekers crossed the isthmus on their way to the West Coast. With the rapid settlement of California, some Americans began to think of improving communications by constructing a canal somewhere across Central America. But Great Britain also had strong interests in that part of the world. A possible clash was averted by the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty (1850), in which Great Britain and the United States agreed that, if and when a canal were ever built, it would be a joint Anglo-American project.

New trouble with Britain in Central America arose from the filibustering activities of William Walker, the "gray-eyed man of destiny," an American of tremendous drive in a tiny body (he weighed just 100 pounds). With a band of American soldiers of fortune, most of them veterans of the war with Mexico, Walker made himself dictator of Nicaragua (1855) and had visions of heading a federation of Central American states. The British government, along with antislavery Americans, supposed that he was acting as an agent for President Pierce and was preparing the way for American annexation. This suspicion, though unfounded, seemed to be confirmed when Pierce recognized Walker's government. When Walker, after having been driven out of Nicaragua, attempted to return by way of Honduras, a British naval officer seized him and turned him over to the Honduran authorities. They disposed of him with a firing squad.

Meanwhile the Pierce administration had made all too clear its determination to obtain Cuba. In 1854 Secretary Marcy instructed the minister to Spain, Pierre Soule of Louisiana, to

make a new offer to buy the island. If this was refused he was to try to "detach" Cuba from Spain. Soulé was plotting with Spanish revolutionaries to overthrow the Spanish monarchy when he received new instructions: he was to consult with the ministers to England and France, James Buchanan and John Y. Mason. The three embodied their recommendations in a diplomatic dispatch that shortly found its way into the newspapers and became notorious as the Ostend Manifesto. This remarkable docu-

ment stated that if Spain should persist in refusing to sell Cuba, and if disturbances there should threaten American security, the United States would be justified in "wresting" the island from Spain.

Antislavery Northerners now charged the administration with violating the spirit of the Compromise of 1850. They said that Pierce, acting as the tool of the South, was conspiring to bring in a new slave state even at the risk of war with Spain and other European powers.

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# The Breaking of the Union





## Fourteen

George Washington on leaving the presidency had cautioned his fellow citizens that it might 'disturb our Union' if political parties should ever be organized on a geographical basis—Eastern against Western or Northern against Southern—'whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views.' He explained:

One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts.

From the beginning the parties had been national, not sectional. From the 1830s on, Whigs from North and South cooperated against Democrats from North and South. Partisan loyalties cut across geographical lines and served as bond of union. So did denominational loyalties at a time when Northerners and Southerners belonged to the same national churches.

But bonds of union began to break. In the 1840s the Methodists and Baptists divided, because of the slavery question, into separate Northern and Southern organizations, and thereafter other churches were torn by sectional quarrels. Then, during the 1850s, the Whig party disintegrated. In the North it was replaced by a new party, the Republican, which had no members in the South. For a while the Democratic party continued to have a nationwide membership, but the party was weakened by sectional strains, and in 1860 it split into Northern and Southern wings. The tune against which George Washington had warned was at hand.

No doubt some of the politicians of each section had misinterpreted the 'opinions and aims' of the other. Still, the sectionalization of parties was due not merely to the influence of 'designing men' but also to a real



### A Union Army Camp

*This photograph of an encampment of the Army of the Potomac gives an impression of the huge, sprawling expanse of a Civil War army at rest—the array of tents, artillery, and wagons. This particular camp occupied a space of 20 square miles. (Top left, Library of Congress)*

### A Recruiting Poster for Negro Soldiers

*This poster was typical of many put out by organizations in the North to induce Negroes to join the Union armies. Negro units were nearly always commanded by white officers. (Bottom left, Library of Congress)*

difference of local interests and views." The breaking of the bonds of union and of the Union itself could hardly have occurred without real and substantial causes—the rise of opposition to slavery on moral grounds, the rapid industrialization of the North, the westward movement of population. The political disputes that led to national disruption centered on the question of future slavery in the West, not present

slavery in the South, but that was largely due to the nature of the American Constitution. Opponents of slavery could hardly contend that the Constitution gave the federal government power to abolish it in the states where it already existed. These people did maintain—though defenders of slavery denied—that the federal government could, and should, prevent its spread to new territories.

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## New Territorial Controversy

By the 1850s the line of frontier settlement had reached the great bend of the Missouri. Beyond the western boundaries of Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri stretched the vast expanse of plains earlier called the Great American Desert and designated as an Indian reserve. Now it was known that large sections of this region were suited to farming, and in the Northwest people were saying that the national government should open the area to settlement, provide it with territorial government, and remove the Indians. The problem of communication between the older states and the trans-Mississippi West had become urgent.

### THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT

The idea of a transcontinental railroad had been discussed in and out of Congress for years. Disagreement arose when people talked about the eastern terminus of the road and its specific route. Several cities pressed their claims, but the leading contenders were Chicago, St. Louis, Memphis, and New Orleans. The transcontinental railroad, like nearly everything else in the fifties, became entangled in sectionalism. It became a prize that the North and South struggled to secure.

One argument against a southern route had been removed through the foresight of Secretary of War Jefferson Davis. Surveys had indicated that a road from a southern terminus would probably have to pass through an area south of the Gila River, in Mexican territory. At Davis' suggestion, Pierce appointed James

Gadsden, a Southern railroad builder, to negotiate with Mexico for the sale of this region. Gadsden persuaded the Mexican government to dispose of a strip of land that today comprises a part of Arizona and New Mexico, the so-called Gadsden Purchase (1853), which cost the United States \$10 million.

Particularly interested in a transcontinental railroad was Senator Stephen A. Douglas, and his interest influenced him to introduce in Congress a fateful legislative act, one that accomplished the final destruction of the Compromise of 1850. As a senator from Illinois and a resident of Chicago and, above all, as the acknowledged leader of the Northwestern Democrats, Douglas naturally wanted the transcontinental railroad for his own city and section. He realized too the potency of the principal argument urged against the northern route: that west of the Mississippi it would run largely through unsettled Indian country. In January 1854, as chairman of the Committee on Territories, he acted to forestall this argument. He introduced a bill to organize a huge new territory, to be known as Nebraska, west of Iowa and Missouri.

Douglas seemed to realize that his bill would encounter the opposition of the South, partly because it would prepare the way for a new free state, the proposed territory being in the Louisiana Purchase area north of the 36° 30' line of the Missouri Compromise and hence closed to slavery. In an effort to make the measure acceptable to Southerners, Douglas inserted a provision that the status of slavery in the territory would be determined by the terri-

torial legislature, that is, according to popular sovereignty. Theoretically at least, this would open the region to slavery. The concession was not enough to satisfy extreme Southern Democrats, particularly those from Missouri who feared that their state would be surrounded by free territory. They demanded more, and Douglas had to give more to get their support. He agreed to two additions to his bill: a clause specifically repealing the antislavery provision of the Missouri Compromise, and another creating two territories, Nebraska and Kansas, instead of one. Presumably Kansas would become a slave state. In its final form the measure was known as the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Douglas induced President Pierce to endorse his bill, and so it became an official Democratic measure. But even with the backing of the administration, it encountered stiff opposition and did not become a law until May 1854. Nearly all the Southern members of Congress, whether Whigs or Democrats, supported the bill, and nearly all the Northern Whigs opposed it. The Northern Democrats split, with half of their votes in the House going for the act and half against it.

Of greater importance than the opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act in Congress was the reaction against it in the Northern states. The whole North seemed to blaze with fury at this latest demonstration of the power of the slavocracy, and much of the fury was directed at Douglas, who, in the eyes of many Northerners, had acted as a tool of the slaveholders. No other piece of legislation in congressional history produced as many immediate, sweeping, and ominous changes as the Kansas-Nebraska Act. It destroyed the Whig party in the South except in the border states. At the same time, as many Southern Whigs became Democrats, it increased Southern influence in the Democratic party. It destroyed the popular basis of Whiggery in the North, with the result that by 1856 the national Whig party had disappeared and a conservative influence in American politics had been removed. It divided the Northern Democrats and drove many of them from the party. Most important of all, it called into being a new party that was frankly sectional in composition and creed.

Men in both the major parties who opposed Douglas' bill took to calling themselves Anti-Nebraska Democrats and Anti-Nebraska Whigs. In 1854 these men formed a new party

and began to call themselves "Republicans." Originating in a series of spontaneous popular meetings throughout the Northwest, the Republican movement soon spread to the East. In the elections of 1854 the Republicans, often acting in concert with the Know-Nothings, elected a majority to the House and won control of a number of Northern state governments. For the moment the new party was a one-idea organization: its only platform was opposition to the expansion of slavery into the territories. Composed mainly of former Whigs and Free-Soilers but also including a substantial number of former Democrats, it represented in large part the democratic idealism of the North. But it contained, in addition, Northern power groups who felt that the South—the champion of a low tariff, the enemy of homesteads and internal improvements—was blocking their legitimate economic aspirations.

#### "BLEEDING KANSAS"

The pulsing popular excitement aroused in the North by the Kansas-Nebraska Act was sustained by events occurring during the next two years in Kansas. Almost immediately settlers moved into this territory. Some went as dedicated men who were determined to make Kansas free—or slave. Those from the North were encouraged by press and pulpit and the powerful organs of abolitionist propaganda. Often they received financial help from organizations like the New England Emigrant Aid Company, which had been created to render such assistance. Those from the South often received financial contributions from the communities they left.

In the spring of 1855 elections were held for a territorial legislature. Thousands of Missourians, some traveling in armed bands, moved into Kansas and voted. Although there were probably only some 1,500 legal votes in the territory, over 6,000 votes were counted. With such conditions prevailing, the proslavery forces elected a majority to the legislature, which proceeded immediately to enact a series of laws legalizing slavery. The outraged free-staters, convinced that they could not get a fair deal from the Pierce administration, resolved on extralegal action. Without asking permission from Congress or the territorial governor, they elected delegates to a constitutional convention

# FREE STATE CONVENTION!

All persons who are favorable to a union of effort, and a permanent organization of all the Free State citizens of Kansas Territory, and who wish to secure upon the broadest platform the co-operation of all who agree upon this point, are invited to meet at their several places of holding elections, in their respective districts on the 5th of August, instant, at one o'clock, P. M., and appoint themselves agents to each representative to which they were entitled in the Legislative Assembly, who shall meet in general Convention at

## Big Springs, Wednesday, Sept. 5th '55.

At 10 o'clock A. M., for the purpose of adopting a Platform upon which all may not harmoniously who prefer Freedom to Slavery.

The nomination of a Delegate to Congress, will also come up before the General Convention.

Let no sentiment or party bias prevent the perfect co-operation of Free State men. Union and harmony are absolutely necessary to success. The pro-slavery party are fully and efficiently organized. No less our inner issues divide them. And to contend against them successfully, we also must be united.

Without guidance and harmony of action we are certain to fail. Let every man then do his duty and we are certain of victory.

All Free State men, without distinction, are earnestly requested to take immediate and effective steps to insure a full and correct representation for every district in the Territory. "United we stand; divided we fall."

By order of the Executive Committee of the Free State Party of the Territory of Kansas, in per resolution of the Mass Convention in session at Lawrence.

Aug 2nd and 3rd, 1855.

**J. E. GOODIN, Sec'y.**

**C. ROBINSON, Chairman.**

### Free Soilers Organize in Kansas

After the Kansas proslavery elements, with the aid of "border ruffians" from Missouri, had elected a proslavery legislature, the free soilers called a convention and prepared to organize their own, antislavery government. A broadside was widely posted to announce the call. (The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka)

which met at Topeka and adopted a constitution excluding slavery. They then chose a governor and legislature and petitioned Congress for statehood. Pierce stigmatized their movement as unlawful and akin to treason. The full weight of the government, he announced, would be thrown behind the proslavery territorial legislature.

A few months later a proslavery federal marshal assembled a huge posse, consisting mostly of Missourians, to arrest the free-state leaders in Lawrence. The posse not only made the arrests but sacked the town. Retribution came immediately. Among the more extreme antislavery men was a fierce, fanatical old man named John Brown who considered himself an instrument of God's will to destroy slavery. Estimating that five antislavery men had been murdered, he decided that it was his sacred

duty to take revenge. He gathered six followers, and in one night murdered five proslavery settlers (the "Pottawatomie massacre"). The result was to touch off civil war in Kansas—irregular, guerrilla war conducted by armed bands, some of them more interested in land claims or loot than in ideologies.

People in the North and the South believed (and whether or not their beliefs were completely correct is historically unimportant) that the aggressive designs of the other section were epitomized by what was happening in Kansas. Thus "Bleeding Kansas" became a symbol of the sectional controversy.

In May 1856 Charles Sumner of Massachusetts arose in the Senate to discuss affairs in the strife-torn territory. He entitled his speech "The Crime Against Kansas." Handsome, humorless, sincere, doctrinaire, Sumner em-



bodied the extreme element of the political antislavery movement. In his address he fiercely denounced the Pierce administration, the South, and slavery; and he singled out for particular attention as a champion of slavery Senator Andrew P. Butler of South Carolina. It was an age when orators were wont to indulge freely in personal invective, but in his allusions to Butler and others, Sumner went further than most.

Particularly enraged by the attack was Butler's nephew, Preston Brooks, a member of the House from South Carolina. He resolved to punish Sumner by a method approved by the Southern code—by publicly and physically chastising him. Approaching him at his desk when the Senate was not in session, Brooks proceeded to beat him with a cane until Sumner fell to the floor in bloody unconsciousness. The injured senator stayed out of the Senate four years, and during his absence his state refused to elect a successor. Brooks, censured by the House, resigned and stood for reelection. He was returned by an almost unanimous vote.

The violence in Congress, like that in Kansas, was a symbol. It showed that Americans were becoming so agitated by their differences that they could not settle them by the normal political processes of debate and the ballot.

## BUCHANAN AND DEPRESSION

The presidential campaign of 1856 got under way with the country convulsed by the Brooks assault and the continuing violence in Kansas. The Democrats adopted a platform that endorsed the Kansas-Nebraska Act and defended popular sovereignty. The leaders wanted a candidate who had not made many enemies and who was not closely associated with the explosive question of "Bleeding Kansas." So the nomination went to James Buchanan of Pennsylvania, a reliable party stalwart who as minister to England had been safely out of the country during the recent troubles, though he was a signer of the highly controversial Ostend Manifesto.

The Republicans, engaging in their first presidential contest, faced the campaign with confidence. They denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the expansion of slavery but

also approved a program of internal improvements, thus beginning to combine the idealism of antislavery with the economic aspirations of the North. Just as eager as the Democrats to present a safe candidate, the Republicans nominated John C. Frémont, who had made a national reputation as an explorer of the Far West. A sincere Republican, the glamorous "Pathfinder" was selected because he had no political record and was highly available.

The Native American or Know-Nothing party was beginning to break apart on the inevitable rock of sectionalism. At its convention, many Northern delegates withdrew because the platform was not sufficiently firm in opposing the expansion of slavery. The remaining delegates nominated former President Millard Fillmore. His candidacy was endorsed by the sad remnant of another party, the few remaining Whigs who could not bring themselves to support either Buchanan or Frémont.

The campaign was the most exciting since 1840. Its frenzied enthusiasm was due largely to the Republicans. They shouted for "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Men, and Frémont," depicted "Bleeding Kansas" as a sacrifice to the evil ambitions of the slavocracy, and charged that the South, using Northern dupes like Buchanan as its tools, was plotting to extend slavery into every part of the country.

The returns seemed to indicate that the prevailing mood of the country was conservative. Buchanan, the winning candidate, polled 1,838,000 popular votes to 1,341,000 for Frémont, and 874,000 for Fillmore. A slight shift of votes in Pennsylvania and Illinois would have thrown those states into the Republican column and elected Fremont.

James Buchanan had been in public office almost continuously since the age of twenty-three. Nearly sixty-six at the time of his inauguration he was, except for William Henry Harrison, the oldest President ever to take office. Undoubtedly his age and his physical infirmities had much to do with the indecision he was often to display.

In the year Buchanan took over, a financial panic struck the country, followed by several years of stringent depression. Europe had shown an unusual demand for American food during the Crimean War (1854–1856) and when the demand fell off, agricultural prices were seriously depressed. The depression sharp-

ened sectional differences. The South was not hit as hard as the North. Southern leaders now found confirmation for their claim that their economic system was superior to that of the free states. Smarting under previous Northern criticisms of Southern society, they loudly boasted of their superiority to the North.

In the North the depression strengthened the Republican party and weakened the Democratic. Distressed economic groups—manufacturers and farmers—came to believe that the hard times had been caused by unsound policies of Southern-controlled Democratic administrations. These groups thought that prosperity could be restored by a high tariff (the tariff was lowered again in 1857), a home-stead act, and internal improvements—all measures to which the South was opposed. In

short, the frustrated economic interests of the North were being drawn into an alliance with the antislavery elements as represented by the Republican party.

### THE DRED SCOTT CASE

The Supreme Court of the United States projected itself into the sectional controversy with its decision in the case of *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, handed down two days after Buchanan was inaugurated.

Dred Scott was a Missouri slave, once the property of an army surgeon who on his military pilgrimages had carried him to Illinois, a free state, and to Minnesota Territory, where slavery was forbidden by the Missouri Compro-

#### Dred Scott and Roger B. Taney

*A former Maryland slaveowner, Taney was one of the greatest of all Chief Justices of the United States, but his reputation in the North was badly damaged by his proslavery, anti-Negro decision in the Dred Scott case. After the decision, Scott was freed by his owner and was employed as a hotel porter in St. Louis. A year later, in 1858, he died of tuberculosis. (National Archives)*



mise. Scott was persuaded by some abolitionists to bring suit in the Missouri courts for his freedom on the ground that residence in a free territory had made him a free man. The state supreme court decided against him. Meanwhile, the surgeon having died and his widow having married an abolitionist, ownership of Scott was transferred to her brother, J. F. A. Sanford, who lived in New York. Now Scott's lawyers could get the case into the federal courts on the ground that the suit lay between citizens of different states. Regardless of the final decision, Scott would be freed, as his abolitionist owners would not keep him a slave. The case was intended to secure a federal decision on the status of slavery in the territories.

Of the nine justices, seven were Democrats (five of them from the South), one was a Whig, and one was a Republican. Chief Justice Taney, in the majority opinion, declared that Scott was not a citizen of Missouri and hence could not bring a suit in the federal courts. According to Taney, no Negro could qualify as a citizen. So far as the Constitution was concerned, he added, Negroes had no rights that white men were bound to respect. Having said this, Taney could simply have declined jurisdiction over the case. Instead, he went on to argue that Scott's sojourn in Minnesota had not affected his status as a slave. Slaves were property, said Taney, and the Fifth Amendment prohibited Congress from taking property without "due process of law." Consequently, Congress possessed no authority to pass a law depriving persons of their slave property in the territories. The Missouri Compromise, therefore, had always been null and void.

Few judicial opinions have stirred as much popular excitement as this one did. Southern whites were elated: the highest tribunal in the land had invested with legal sanction the extreme Southern argument. On behalf of abolitionists black and white, Frederick Douglass declared: "This very attempt to blot out forever the hopes of an enslaved people may be one necessary link in the chain of events preparatory to the complete overthrow of the whole slave system." Republicans denounced the decision. They said it deserved as much consideration as any pronouncement by a group of political hacks. They threatened that when they secured control of the national government, they would reverse the decision—by altering the

personnel of the Court and "packing" it with new members.

## DEADLOCK OVER KANSAS

Endorsing the decision, President Buchanan concluded that the best solution for the Kansas troubles was to force the admission of that territory as a slave state. The existing proslavery territorial legislature called an election for delegates to a constitutional convention. The free-state people refused to participate. As a result, the proslavery forces won control of the convention, which met in 1857 at Lecompton and framed a constitution establishing slavery. When an election for a new territorial legislature was called, the antislavery groups turned out to vote and won a majority. Promptly the legislature moved to submit the Lecompton constitution to the voters. The document was rejected by more than 10,000 votes.

Although both sides had resorted to fraud and violence, the Kansas picture was clear enough. The majority of the people did not want to see slavery established. Unfortunately Buchanan could not see, or did not want to see, the true picture. He urged Congress to admit Kansas under the Lecompton constitution, and he tried to force the party to back his proposal. Stephen A. Douglas and other Western Democrats refused to accept this perversion of popular sovereignty. Openly breaking with the administration, Douglas denounced the Lecompton proposition. And although Buchanan's plan passed the Senate, Western Democrats helped to block it in the House. Partly to avert further division in the party, a compromise measure, the English bill, was now offered (1858) and passed. It provided that the Lecompton constitution should be submitted to the people of Kansas for the third time. If the document was approved, Kansas was to be admitted and given a federal land grant; if it was disapproved, statehood would be postponed until the population reached 93,600, the legal ratio for a representative in Congress. Again, and for the last time, the Kansas voters decisively rejected the Lecompton constitution. Not until the closing months of Buchanan's administration, in 1861, when a number of Southern states had withdrawn from the Union, would Kansas enter the Union—as a free state.

## LINCOLN AGAINST DOUGLAS

The congressional elections of 1858 were of greater interest and importance than is usually true of such mid-term contests. Not only did they have an immediate and powerful influence on the course of the sectional controversy, but they projected into the national spotlight the man who was to be the dominating figure in the tragic years just ahead.

The widest public attention was attracted by the senatorial election in Illinois. There Stephen A. Douglas, the most prominent Northern Democrat, was a candidate for reelection, and he was fighting for his political life. Since Douglas, or his successor, would be chosen by a legislature that was yet to be elected, the control of that body became a matter of paramount importance. To punish Douglas for his resistance to the Lecompton constitution, the Buchanan administration entered Democratic candidates opposed to him in many legislative districts. But Douglas' greatest worry was that he faced

Abraham Lincoln, the ablest campaigner in the Republican party.

Lincoln had been the leading Whig in Illinois. He was now the leading Republican in the state, though hardly a national figure—his reputation could not compare with that of the famous Douglas. Lincoln challenged the senator to a series of seven joint debates. Douglas accepted, and the two candidates argued their cases before huge crowds. The Lincoln-Douglas debates were widely reported by the nation's press, and before their termination the Republican who had dared to challenge the "Little Giant" of the Democracy was a man of national prominence.

Douglas, while defending popular sovereignty, accused the Republicans of promoting a war of sections, of wishing to interfere with slavery in the South, and of advocating social equality of the races. Lincoln, denying these charges (which were untrue), accused the Democrats and Douglas of conspiring to extend slavery into the territories and possibly, by

### Lincoln and Douglas in Debate

*This is a depiction by a later artist, R. M. Root, of the debate between Lincoln and Douglas at Charleston. Lincoln, who was beardless until 1861, is speaking, and Douglas sits at his right. Various dignitaries of both parties are on the platform. The man behind Lincoln and to the left taking notes is probably a reporter. In the 1850s speeches were frequently recorded by men known as "stenographic reporters." They used a system of shorthand devised by Isaac Pitman and described by him in a book published in 1837, Stenographic Sound Hand. (Illinois State Historical Library)*



means of another Supreme Court decision, into the free states as well (a charge that also was untrue). Lincoln was particularly effective in making it appear that Douglas did not regard slavery as morally wrong. He quoted Douglas as saying he did not care whether slavery was "voted up, or voted down."

Lincoln was opposed to slavery — on moral, political, and economic grounds. He believed that it contradicted the American ideal of democracy. Let the idea be established that Negroes were not created with an equal right to earn their bread, he said, and the next step would be to deny the right to certain groups of whites, such as day laborers. His solicitude for the economic well-being of the white masses impelled Lincoln to oppose the introduction of slavery into the territories. He maintained that the national lands should be preserved as places for poor white people to go to better their condition.

Yet Lincoln was opposed to the abolitionist. The physical fact of slavery, he believed, must be taken into account. "We have a due regard to the actual presence of it amongst us and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way and all the constitutional obligations thrown about it." He and his party would "arrest the further spread of it," that is, prevent its expansion into the territories, and thus prepare for its "ultimate extinction." His plan, then, was to pen up slavery in the South, where he hoped it would eventually die a natural death.

In the debate at Freeport, Lincoln asked Douglas: Can the people of a territory exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a state constitution? Or in other words, is popular sovereignty still a legal formula despite the Dred Scott decision? The question was a deadly trap, for no matter how Douglas answered

it, he would lose something. If he disavowed popular sovereignty he would undoubtedly be defeated for reelection and his political career would be ended. But if he reaffirmed his formula, Southern Democrats would be offended, the party split deepened, and his chances of securing the Democratic nomination in 1860 damaged if not destroyed.

Boldly Douglas met the issue. The people of a territory, he said, could, by lawful means, shut out slavery prior to the formation of a state constitution. Slavery could not exist a day without the support of "local police regulations": territorial laws recognizing the right of slave ownership. The mere failure of a legislature to enact such laws would have the practical effect of keeping slaveholders out. Thus, despite the Dred Scott decision, a territory could exclude slavery. Douglas' reply became known as the Freeport Doctrine or, in the South, as the Freeport Heresy. It satisfied his followers sufficiently to win him a return to the Senate, but throughout the North it aroused little enthusiasm.

The elections went heavily against the Democrats, who lost ground in almost every Northern state. The administration retained control of the Senate but lost its majority in the House, where the Republicans gained a plurality. In the holdover or short session of 1858–1859, in which the Democrats were in the majority, and in the regular session of 1859 (elected in 1858), every demand of the Republicans and Northern Democrats was blocked by Southern votes or by presidential vetoes. These defeated measures included a tariff increase, a homestead bill, a Pacific railroad, and federal land grants to states for the endowment of agricultural colleges. The 1859 session was also marked by an uproarious struggle over the election of a Speaker of the House.

## The Separation of the Sections

During the 1850s the nation seemed at first to drift and then to rush toward disunion. The fateful goal was reached during the winter of 1860–1861. Thereafter, for more than four years, Americans were divided into what, in effect, amounted to two separate and hostile countries.

### JOHN BROWN'S RAID

Hastening the trend toward disunion was a grim event of 1859. John Brown, the antislavery fanatic from Kansas, now made a spectacular appearance on the national scene. Still convinced that he was God's instrument to destroy

slavery, he decided to transfer his activities from Kansas to the South itself. With encouragement and financial aid from some Eastern abolitionists, he devised a wild scheme for putting an end to slavery. His plan was to seize a mountain fortress in Virginia from which he could make raids to liberate slaves. He would arm the freedmen, set up a Negro republic, and eventually force the South to concede emancipation. He was out to lead a slave insurrection. Because he needed guns, he chose Harpers Ferry, where a United States arsenal was located, as his base of operations. In October, at the head of eighteen followers, he descended on the town and captured the arsenal. Almost immediately he was attacked by citizens and local militia companies, who were shortly reinforced by a detachment of United States marines sent to the scene by the national government. With ten of his men killed, Brown had to surrender. He was promptly tried in a Virginia court for treason against the state, found guilty, and sentenced to death by hanging. Six of his followers met a similar fate.

Probably no other event had so much influence as the Harpers Ferry raid in convincing Southerners that their section was unsafe in the Union. Despite all their eulogies of slavery, one great fear always secretly gnawed at their hearts: the possibility of a general slave insurrection. Southerners now jumped to the conclusion that the Republicans were responsible for Brown's raid. This was, of course, untrue; prominent Republicans like Lincoln and Seward condemned Brown as a criminal. But Southerners were more impressed by the words of such abolitionists as Wendell Phillips and Ralph Waldo Emerson, who now glorified Brown as a new saint. His execution made him a martyr to thousands of Northerners.

## ELECTION OF LINCOLN

The election of 1860, judged by its consequences, was the most momentous in American history.

As the Democrats gathered in convention at Charleston, South Carolina, in April, most of the Southern delegates came with the determination to adopt a platform providing for federal protection of slavery in the territories: that is, an official endorsement of the principles of the

Dred Scott decision. The Western Democrats, arriving with bitter recollections of how Southern influence had blocked their legislative demands in the recent Congress, were angered at the rule-or-ruin attitude of the Southerners. The Westerners hoped, however, to negotiate a face-saving statement on slavery so as to hold the party together. They vaguely endorsed popular sovereignty and proposed that all questions involving slavery in the territories be left up to the Supreme Court. When the convention adopted the Western platform, the delegations from eight lower South states withdrew from the hall. The remaining delegates then proceeded to the selection of a candidate. Stephen A. Douglas led on every ballot, but he could not muster the two-thirds majority (of the original number of delegates) required by party rules. Finally the managers adjourned the convention to meet again in Baltimore in June. At the Baltimore session, most of the Southerners reappeared, only to walk out again. The rest of the Southerners had assembled at Richmond. The rump convention at Baltimore nominated Douglas. The Southern bolters at Baltimore and the men in Richmond nominated John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky.

Sectionalism had at last divided the historic Democratic party. There were now two Democratic candidates in the field, and, although Douglas had supporters in the South and Breckinridge in the North, one was the nominee of the Northern Democrats and the other of the Southern Democrats.

The Republicans held their convention in Chicago in May. Although the divisions developing in the Democratic ranks seemed to spell a Republican triumph, the party managers were taking no chances on a slip-up. They were determined that the party, in both its platform and its candidate, should appear to the voters as representing conservatism, stability, and moderation rather than radical idealism. No longer was the Republican party a one-idea organization composed of crusaders against slavery. It now embraced, or hoped to embrace, every major interest group in the North that believed that the South, the champion of slavery, was blocking its legitimate economic aspirations.

The platform endorsed such measures as a high tariff, internal improvements, a homestead bill, and a Pacific railroad to be built with

# WHERE HISTORIANS DISAGREE

## The Causes of the Civil War

On the causation of the Civil War historians' views have changed with changing times, thus illustrating the fact that history reflects the period *in* which it is written as well as the period *about* which it is written. In the 1890s, when the United States was emerging as a world power, the Civil War seemed to have been concerned with fundamental issues, for it had not only destroyed slavery but also preserved the Union, thus making possible the nation's rise to greatness. Such was the implied theme of the leading authority of the time, James Ford Rhodes. In his *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* (7 vols., 1893–1900) Rhodes saw the war as originating in the conflict between Northern opponents and Southern defenders of slavery.

This view prevailed until the 1920s, when Charles and Mary Beard challenged it in *The Rise of American Civilization* (2 vols., 1927). The Beards believed that in politics the most powerful of human motivations were economic. Like many of their contemporaries among the intellectual class, these authors were disillusioned with the efforts of progressives to curb business monopolies. The Beards maintained that the basic causes of the Civil War were economic. According to them, the war arose out of a clash between Northern industrialists and Southern planters, each group seeking to control the federal government in its own interest and both groups using arguments about slavery and state rights only as smoke screens. The Beards had doubts about the results of the Second American Revolution, as they called the war, for it brought on the evils associated with the rise of big business.

In the 1930s the Beardian interpretation began to be superseded by the views of the revisionists. While these men were writing the American revolution against war was at its height. 'The recent war to end war' and 'make the world safe for democracy' had obviously done neither, and American participation in it seemed now like a great mistake. The Civil War, too, had been unfortunate and useless, according to the revisionists, such as Avery Craven and James G. Randall, who blamed it on the fanaticism and political ineptitude of a 'blundering generation'.

After World War II, which appeared to have saved democracy from the threat of Hitlerism, historians took a new look at the Civil War and concluded once again that it had been necessary and worthwhile. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., explained that violence was sometimes indispensable for clearing away obstacles to social progress and that slavery had been such an obstacle. Allan Nevins, beginning a multivolume restudy of the period 1850–1877 in *The Ordeal of the Union* and *The Emergence of Lincoln* (4 vols., 1947–1950), characterized the Civil War as 'a war over slavery and the future position of the Negro race in North America'. As the civil rights movement gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s, historians gave more and more attention to slavery and race relations as central issues in the sectional conflict of the 1850s and 1860s. Eugene Genovese, for one, saw the war as growing out of the Southern planters' efforts to protect and expand the slave system.





views, claiming that anything he said would be seized on by Southerners and misrepresented.

In the November election Lincoln won a majority of the electoral votes and the presidency, though only about two-fifths of the popular votes. The Republicans had elected a President, but they had failed to secure a majority in Congress; and of course they did not control the Supreme Court.

## SECESSION OF THE SOUTH

During the campaign various Southern leaders had threatened that if the Republicans won the election the South would secede from the Union. Southerners had voiced secession threats at intervals since 1850, and Northerners had come to believe that the Southerners were bluffing. This time, however, some of them were in earnest.

The concept of secession was rooted in the political philosophy that the South had developed to protect its minority status. According to this doctrine, the Union was an association of sovereign states. The individual states had once joined the Union; they could, whenever they wished, dissolve their connections with it and resume their status as separate sovereignties. For a state to leave the Union was a momentous act but a lawful one, from the Southern point of view. The governor and the legislature could call an election for a special state convention and this body could pass an ordinance of secession.

South Carolina, long the hotbed of Southern separatism, led off the secession parade, its convention taking the state out of the Union on December 20, 1860, by a unanimous vote. Before Lincoln ever assumed the presidency, six other Southern states had left the Union. Not only that, but in February 1861 representatives of the seceded states met at Montgomery, Alabama, and formed a new, Southern nation—the Confederate States of America.

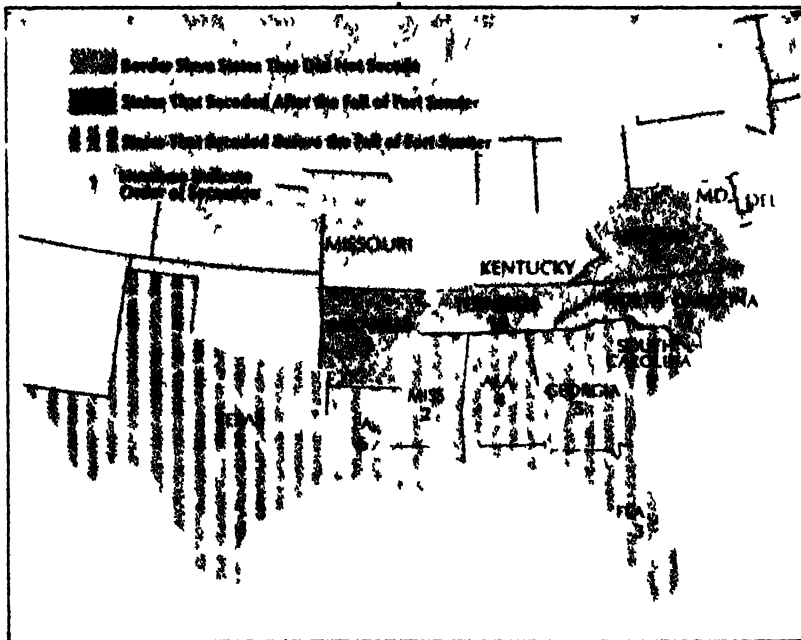
Something of the indecision in Northern attitudes was reflected in the thinking of President Buchanan. In his message to Congress of December 1860, he denied the right of a state to secede but did not think the federal government possessed the power to force a state back into the Union. He intended to avoid a collision of arms and to maintain the symbolic authority

of the national government until his successor could take office.

As the various states seceded, they took possession of federal property within their boundaries, but they lacked the strength to seize certain offshore forts, notably Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, and Fort Pickens in the harbor of Pensacola, Florida. South Carolina sent commissioners to Washington to ask for the surrender of Sumter, garrisoned by a small force under Major Robert Anderson. Buchanan, fearful though he was of provoking a clash, refused to yield the fort. In January 1861 he decided to reinforce it. By his direction an unarmed merchant ship, the *Star of the West*, proceeded to Fort Sumter with troops and supplies. When the vessel attempted to enter the harbor, it encountered the fire of shore batteries and turned back.

Meanwhile Buchanan recommended to Congress that it frame compromise measures to hold the Union together. The Senate and the House appointed committees to study plans of adjustment. The Senate committee concentrated on a proposal submitted by Senator John J. Crittenden of Kentucky. The Crittenden Compromise called for a series of constitutional amendments: one would have guaranteed the permanence of slavery in the states; others were designed to satisfy Southern demands on such matters as fugitive slaves and slavery in the District of Columbia. But the heart of Crittenden's plan dealt with slavery in the territories. He proposed to reestablish the Missouri Compromise line of 36° 30' in all the territory of the United States then held or *thereafter acquired*. Slavery was to be prohibited north of the line and permitted south of it. The Southern members of the committee indicated they would accept this territorial division if the Republicans also would. The Republicans, after sounding out President-elect Lincoln in Illinois, voted against the proposal. Lincoln took the position that the restoration of the Missouri Compromise line would encourage the South to embark on imperialist adventures in Latin America.

One notable attempt to effect a compromise was made outside Congress. The legislature of Virginia invited the other states to send delegates to a peace conference at Washington. Representatives from twenty-one states assembled early in February, and spent most of the



**The Process of Secession**

month framing compromise proposals. The plan of this Peace Convention followed closely the Crittenden scheme. The convention submitted the plan to the Senate, but it received almost no support.

And so nothing had been resolved when Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President on March 4, 1861. In his inaugural address he laid down the following basic principles: the Union was older than the Constitution, no state could of its own volition leave the Union, the ordinances of secession were illegal, and acts of violence to support secession were insurrectionary or revolutionary. He declared that he meant to execute the laws in all the states and to "hold, occupy, and possess" the federal property in the seceded states (Fort Sumter and Pickens).

Lincoln soon found an opportunity to apply his policy in the case of Fort Sumter. Major Anderson was running short of supplies; unless he received fresh provisions the fort would have to be evacuated. If Lincoln permitted the loss of Sumter, the South and perhaps the North would never believe that he meant to sustain the Union. After much deliberation he

decided to dispatch a naval relief expedition to the fort. Carefully he informed the South Carolina authorities, who, of course, would have to notify the Confederate government, that ships were on the way to bring supplies but not to land troops or munitions unless resistance was offered. His move placed the Confederates in a dilemma. If they permitted the expedition to land, they would be bowing tamely to federal authority; their people would not believe that they meant to sustain secession. But the only alternative was to reduce the fort before the ships arrived. After hours of anguished discussion, the government in Montgomery ordered General P. G. T. Beauregard, in charge of Confederate forces at Charleston, to demand Anderson's surrender and, if the demand was refused, to reduce the fort. Beauregard made the demand and Anderson rejected it. The Confederates then bombarded the fort for two days, April 12–13, 1861. On April 14, Anderson surrendered.

War had come. Lincoln moved to increase the army and called on the states to furnish troops to restore the Union. Now four more slave states seceded and joined the Confedera-

cy: Virginia (April 17); Arkansas (May 6); Tennessee (May 7); and North Carolina (May 20). The mountain counties in northwestern Virginia refused to accept the decision of their state, established their own "loyal" government, and in 1863 secured admission to the Union as the new state of West Virginia. The four remaining slave states, Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri, cast their lot with the Union. Lincoln kept a keen watch on their actions, and in two, Maryland and Missouri, helped to ensure their decision by employing military force.

## THE OPPOSING SIDES

A comparison of the combatants on the eve of war reveals that all the great material factors were on the side of the North. And these advantages became more significant as the conflict continued and the superior economy of the North became geared for war production. The North had a larger manpower reservoir from which to draw its armed forces. In the North, or the United States, were twenty-three states with a population of approximately 22 million. In the South, or the Confederate States, were eleven states with a population of about 9 million. Of these, approximately 3.5 million were slaves, leaving a white population of less than 6 million.

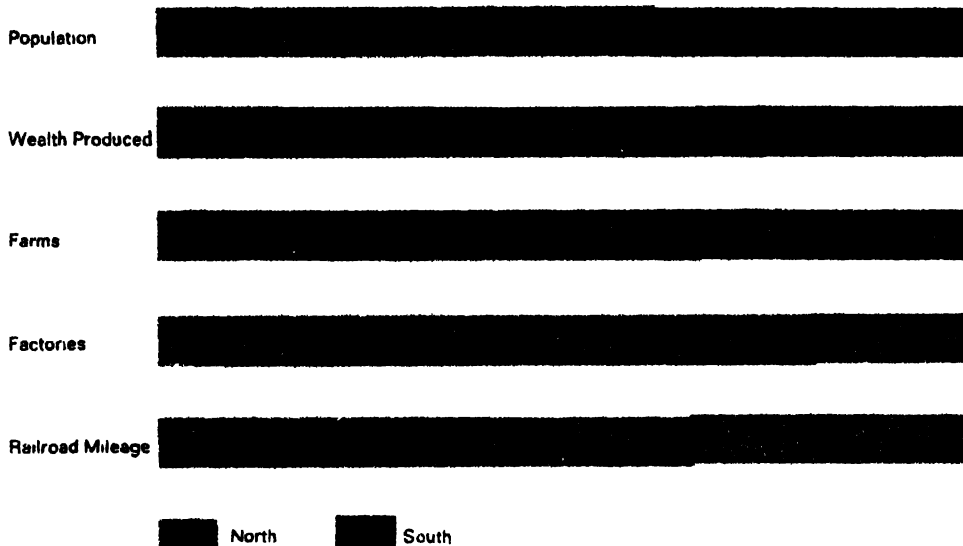
The North's greater economic potential was most formidably apparent in industrial production. Almost any set of comparative figures can be chosen to illustrate the overwhelming nature of Northern superiority. These statistics, translated into material terms, meant that the Northern armies, once the economic system had been converted to war production, would have more of everything than the Southern forces. This was not true, of course, in the first year of the war, when both sides purchased large amounts of supplies, particularly arms, from Europe. After 1862 the North was able to manufacture practically all of its war materials; its dependence on Europe ceased. The South, on the other hand, had to rely on Europe all during the war. It also tried desperately to expand its own industrial facilities. The brilliant Confederate chief of ordnance, Josiah Gorgas, accomplished wonders in building arsenals and in supplying the armies with weapons and munitions. Neverthe-

less, both the quantity and the quality of Confederate firearms were inferior. The Southern economic system was unable to provide its soldiers and civilians with the other materiel of modern war: clothes, boots, blankets, stockings, medical supplies, and the like. Its failure in this respect was one reason why Southern morale dropped badly after 1863.

In every respect the transportation system of the North was superior to that of the South. The North had more and better inland water transport (steamboats, barges), more surfaced roads, and more wagons and animals. The North had approximately 20,000 miles of railroads, while the South, containing at least as large a land area, had only 10,000 miles. The trackage figures, however, do not tell the whole story of Southern inferiority. There were important gaps between key points in the South, which meant that supplies had to be detoured long distances or carried between railheads by wagons. As the war wore on, the Confederate railroad system steadily deteriorated, and by the last year and a half of the struggle it had almost collapsed.

When the material factors are analyzed and weighed, the impression emerges that the South had absolutely no chance to win the war. Actually, the material odds were not so great as they appear at first glance. The South might have won a decision on the battlefield up to 1863. Southern inferiority in manpower and materials was partially offset by other factors. The South, for the most part, fought on the defensive in its own country and commanded interior lines. The Northern invaders had to maintain long lines of communication, to supply themselves in areas where transportation was defective, and to garrison occupied regions. Furthermore, the North had to do more than capture the enemy capital or defeat enemy armies. It had to convince the Southern civilian population that the war was hopeless by seizing and holding most of the Confederacy. The South was fighting for something very concrete, very easy for its people to understand. It simply wanted to be independent, to be let alone; it had no aggressive designs on the North. If the South could have convinced the North that it could not be conquered or that the result would not be worth the sacrifices, it might, even after 1863, have won its independence.

### Comparison of North and South 1860



*If the slaves were not included in the South's total population the North's manpower advantage would appear greater than shown above. Because many of the South's so-called factories were small, the superiority of the North's industrial production was actually greater than this chart indicates.*

### The Aggressor, According to Lincoln

In his July 4, 1861, message to Congress, President Lincoln said with regard to Fort Sumter:

*As had been intended in this contingency, it was also resolved to notify the Governor of South Carolina, that he might expect an attempt would be made to provision the Fort, and that, if the attempt should not be resisted, there would be no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunition without further notice, or in case of an attack upon the Fort. This notice was accordingly given, whereupon the Fort was attacked, and bombarded to its fall without even awaiting the arrival of the provisioning expedition.*

*It is thus seen that the assault upon and reduction of Fort Sumter was, in no sense, a matter of self defence on the part of the assailants. They well knew that the garrison in the Fort could, by no possibility, commit aggression upon them. They knew—they were expressly notified—that the giving of bread to the few brave and hungry men of the garrison was all which would on that occasion be attempted, unless themselves, by resisting so much, should provoke more. They knew that this Government desired to keep the garrison in the Fort, not to assail them, but merely to maintain visible possession, and thus to preserve the Union from actual and immediate dissolution.*

Southerners thought that even if the Southern human resources could not make up for Northern material advantages, there was still an almost certain guarantee of Confederate

victory: Europe would intervene in the war on the side of the South. England and France had to have Southern cotton, and they would force the North to recognize the Confederacy.

## The North Mobilizes

For the North the wartime years became a period of prosperity and expansion. Both industry and agriculture increased their productive facilities and, at the end of the war, were turning out more products than at the beginning.

### ECONOMIC MEASURES

A powerful stimulant to the expanding economy was provided by the economic legislation enacted by the Republican party during the war. The Republicans represented Northern industry and agriculture, and, now that the war had removed Southern opposition, they proceeded to put into effect the kind of program their supporters expected.

The Homestead Act (1862) and the Morrill Land Grant Act (1862) were measures that the West had long sought. The first provided that

any citizen or any alien who had declared his intention to become a citizen could register claim to a quarter section of public land (160 acres), and, after giving proof that he had lived on it for five years, receive title on payment of a small fee. The Morrill Law gave every state 30,000 acres of public land for each of its congressional representatives, the proceeds from the donation to be used for education in agriculture, engineering, and military science. This provided a basis for the development of the so-called land-grant colleges and universities.

Industry scored its first gain a few days before President Buchanan left office. Congress passed the Morrill Tariff Act, which provided a moderate increase in duties, bringing the rates up to approximately what they had been before 1846. Later measures enacted in 1862 and 1864 were frankly protective. By the end of the war the average of duties was 47

### The Aggressor, According to Stephens

President Davis Vice President Stephens and indeed all good Confederates maintained that the war was inaugurated by Lincoln himself. Stephens expressed the Confederate view in the first volume of his postwar work entitled *A Constitutional View of the Late War between the States* (1868):

*It is a fact that the first gun was fired by the Confederates. But did the firing of the first gun or the reduction of Fort Sumter inaugurate or begin the war?* Hallam [an authority on international law] has well said that 'the aggressor in a war (that is, he who begins it) is not the first who uses force but the first who renders force necessary.'

*Which side, according to this high authority (that only announces the common sentiments of mankind) was the aggressor in this instance? Which side—as it that provoked and rendered the first blow necessary? The true answer to that question will settle the fact as to which side began the war.*

*I maintain that it was inaugurated and begun, though no blow had been struck, when the hostile fleet, styled the "Relief Squadron," with eleven ships, carrying two hundred and eighty-five guns and two thousand four hundred men, was sent out from New York and Norfolk with orders from the authorities at Washington to re-enforce Fort Sumter peaceably, if permitted—"but forcibly if they must."*

percent, the highest in the nation's history, and more than double the prewar rate.

Other legislative victories for business were achieved in connection with railroad and immigration. Two laws, passed in 1862 and 1864, created two federal corporations: the Union Pacific Railroad Company, which was to build westward from Omaha, and the Central Pacific, which was to build eastward from California. The government would aid the companies by donating public lands and advancing government loans. Immigration from Europe fell off in the first years of the war, partly because of the unsettled conditions. The decrease, coupled with the military demands for manpower, threatened to cause a labor shortage, and President Lincoln and business leaders asked Congress for governmental encouragement of immigration. In 1864 Congress passed a contract labor law authorizing employers to import laborers and collect the costs of transportation from future wages.

Perhaps the most important measure affecting the business-financial community was the National Bank Act, enacted in 1863 and amended in 1864. The act created the National Banking System, which lasted without serious modification until 1913. Its architects, including Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, argued that, both for the military present and the economic future, the country needed a uniform and standard bank-note currency. At the outbreak of the war 1,500 banks chartered by twenty-nine states were empowered to issue notes. Furthermore, Chase and his supporters claimed, national supervision of the banking system would enable the government to market its bonds more economically, thus aiding war finance.

An existing state bank or a newly formed corporation could secure a federal charter and become a national bank. Each association was required to possess a minimum amount of capital and to invest one-third of its capital in government securities. Upon depositing the securities with the national Treasury, it would receive, and could issue as bank notes, United States Treasury notes up to 90 percent of the current value of the bonds. Congress (in 1865) placed a tax on all state bank notes. This forced state notes out of existence and induced reluctant state banks to seek federal charters.

The North financed the war from three principal sources: taxation, loans, and paper

money issues. From taxes, including the tariff, the government received approximately \$667 million; loans, including Treasury notes, accounted for \$2.6 billion; and \$450 million of paper currency ("greenbacks") was issued.

Since the greenbacks bore no interest, were not supported by a specie reserve, and depended for redemption on the good faith of the government (and its ability to win the war), they fluctuated in value. In 1864 a greenback dollar, in relation to a gold dollar, was worth only 39 cents, and even at the close of the war its value had advanced to but 67 cents.

In America's previous wars, bonds had been sold only to banks and to a few wealthy investors. Through the agency of Jay Cooke, a Philadelphia banker, the Treasury now launched a campaign to persuade the ordinary man (and woman) to buy a bond. By high-pressure propaganda techniques, Cooke disposed of \$400 million of bonds—the first example of mass financing of a war in our history.

Not until 1862, when mounting war expenses forced the country to face realities, did Congress adopt an adequate tax program. Then it passed the Internal Revenue Act, which placed duties on practically all goods and most occupations. For the first time, in 1861, the government levied an income tax: a duty of 3 percent on incomes above \$800. Later the rates were increased to 5 percent on incomes between \$600 and \$5,000, and to 10 percent on incomes above the latter figure. Through the medium of the various war taxes, the hand of the government was coming to rest upon most individuals in the country. The United States was in the process of acquiring a national internal revenue system—in fact, a national tax system—one of the many nationalizing effects of the war.

## RAISING THE UNION ARMIES

When hostilities started, the regular army numbered only about 16,000 troops, and many of its units were scattered throughout the West. President Lincoln, in his first call for troops to repress the "rebellion," summoned 75,000 militia for three months, the usual period of service set for state troops by existing militia law. Lincoln soon realized that the war would be of longer duration. Without constitutional sanction, he called for 42,000 volunteers for national

service for three years and authorized an increase of 23,000 in the regular army. When Congress met in July 1861, it legalized the President's acts, and, at his recommendation, provided for enlisting 500,000 volunteers to serve for three years.

For a time the volunteering system served to bring out enough men to fill the armies, but not after the first flush of enthusiasm had worn off. Finally, in March 1863, Congress enacted the first national draft law in American history (the South had employed conscription almost a year earlier). Few exemptions were permitted: only high national and state officials, preachers, and men who were the sole support of a dependent family. But a drafted man could escape service by hiring a substitute to go in his place or by paying the government a fee of \$300.

The purpose of the law was to spur enlistments by threatening to invoke conscription. Each state was divided into enrollment districts and was assigned a quota of men to be raised. If a state could fill the quota, it would escape the draft completely; if certain districts failed to meet their quota, a sufficient number of men were drafted to make up the difference. Some states and many districts never experienced conscription. Although the draft directly inducted only 46,000 men, it stimulated enlistments enormously. These totaled 2.9 million, but that figure includes many who enlisted several times or served short terms. Probably 1.5 million men, all together, served in the Union armies (as contrasted with 900,000 in the Confederate forces).

The casualty rate was tremendous. Not until World War I would military medicine reach a point where fewer men died from sickness than from bullets. Doubtless the death rate in camp and hospital would have been even greater but for the work of a number of private relief organizations, the largest being the United States Sanitary Commission, which provided medical care, medical supplies, and food to the armed forces.

To a people accustomed to a government that had hardly touched their daily lives, conscription seemed a strange and ominous thing. Opposition to the law was widespread, particularly from laborers, immigrants, and Peace Democrats. In places it erupted into violence. Demonstrators against the draft rioted in New York City for four days in July 1863, killed

several hundred people, mostly Negroes, and burned down Negro homes and businesses. Federal troops had to be brought in to subdue the rioters. Some Democratic governors who supported the war (like Horatio Seymour of New York) contended that the national government had no constitutional power to conscript, and they openly challenged the Lincoln administration on the issue.

## POLITICS AND EMANCIPATION

When Lincoln first took over the presidency, he was widely considered a small-time prairie politician, unfit for his job. He strengthened this impression by his unpretentious air. Actually, he was well aware of his great abilities and of his superiority over other Northern leaders. His supreme confidence in himself was demonstrated by his choice of a cabinet. Representing every faction of the Republican party and every segment of Northern opinion, it was an extraordinary assemblage of advisers and a difficult set of prima donnas to manage. Three of the secretaries, Seward, Chase, and Stanton, were first-rate men. Seward and Chase thought that they were abler than Lincoln and should be in his place. At the very beginning of the administration, Seward made an attempt to dominate Lincoln, failed, and became his loyal supporter. Chase never learned that the President was a bigger man than he.

Lincoln's confidence in his inner strength was revealed by his bold exercise of the war powers of his office. In order to accomplish his purposes, he was ready to violate parts of the Constitution, explaining that he would not lose the whole by being afraid to disregard a part. In this spirit he called for troops to repress the rebellion (an act that was equivalent to a declaration of war), illegally increased the size of the regular army, and proclaimed a naval blockade of the South.

Opposition to the war came from two sources: from Southern sympathizers in the Union slave states and from the peace wing of the Democratic party. War Democrats were willing to support the war and even to accept offices from the administration. Peace Democrats or, as their enemies called them, "Copperheads," feared that agriculture and the West were being subordinated to industry and

the East and that state rights were going down before nationalism. These Democrats proposed to call a truce in the fighting, invite the South to attend a national convention, and amend the Constitution to preserve both the Union and state rights. Some advocated the formation of a Western confederacy, and some joined secret societies (Knights of the Golden Circle, Sons of Liberty) which allegedly conspired to aid the Southern rebels.

To deal with opponents of the war, Lincoln resorted to military arrests. He suspended the right of habeas corpus, so that an alleged offender could be arrested and held without trial or, if tried, had to appear before a military court. At first Lincoln denied the civil process only in specified areas, but in 1862 he proclaimed that all persons who discouraged enlistments or engaged in disloyal practices would come under martial law. In all, over 13,000 persons were arrested and imprisoned for varying periods. Among those placed in custody was a Maryland secessionist leader whom Lincoln refused to release, even under a writ from Chief Justice Taney (*Ex parte Merryman*). The most prominent Copperhead in the country, Clement L. Vallandigham of Ohio, was seized by military authorities, and Lincoln exiled him to the Confederacy. (After the war, in 1866, the Supreme Court held, in *Ex parte Milligan*, that military trials in areas where the civil courts were capable of functioning were unconstitutional.)

In the Republican as well as the Democratic party there were factions—the Radicals and the Conservatives. On most questions, including economic matters, the two groups were in fundamental agreement, but they differed violently on slavery. Leaders of the Radicals were Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, master of the party machine in the House, and Senators Charles Sumner of Massachusetts and Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio. Heading the Conservatives was President Lincoln. The Radicals wanted to seize the opportunity of the war to strike slavery down—abolish it suddenly and violently. The Conservatives, who were also antislavery, wanted to accomplish the same result in a different way—easily and gradually. Lincoln made several notable although unsuccessful attempts to persuade the loyal slave states to agree to a program of compensated gradual emancipation. He feared, at first, that

the introduction of abolition as a war aim would divide Northern opinion and alienate the border slave states.

A Confiscation Act, passed in August 1861, declared free all slaves used for "insurrectionary" purposes. Subsequent laws abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, with compensation to owners (April 1862), and in the national territories (June 1862). In the summer of 1862 the Radicals decided that Northern opinion had reached a point where they could move against slavery in the states. In July they pushed through Congress the second Confiscation Act, which was in essence a bold attempt to accomplish emancipation by legislative action. It declared the property of persons supporting the "rebellion" subject to forfeiture to the United States government; declared free the slaves of persons aiding and supporting the insurrection; and authorized the President to employ Negroes, including freed slaves, as soldiers.

The Republican party was coming under Radical control, and the country was beginning to accept emancipation as an aim of the war. The signs were not lost on the astute master of politics in the White House. Lincoln saw that in order to achieve his larger purpose of saving the Union he would have to yield his lesser goal of preventing the sudden destruction of slavery. To preserve the nation he had to have the support of his own party and particularly of the Radicals, who were the last-ditch Unionists, the men who would never give up the war. And if a majority of the Northern people wanted slavery destroyed, as seemed the case, he could not afford to divide popular opinion by opposing their will. In July 1862 he decided to take the leadership of the antislavery impulse away from the Radicals by putting himself at the head of it.

On September 22, 1862, after the Battle of Antietam, the President issued his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, and on the first day of 1863 his final Emancipation Proclamation. This declared forever free the slaves in designated areas of the Confederacy. Excepted from the edict was the whole state of Tennessee, most of which was under Union control, and western Virginia and southern Louisiana, which were occupied by Federal troops. Presumably these areas were omitted because they were not enemy territory and hence were



not subject to the President's war powers. For a similar reason the Proclamation did not apply to the border slave states. .

The Proclamation freed immediately only a few slaves. But it indicated that henceforth there was to be a war for the emancipation of the slaves as well as for the preservation of the Union. Eventually as federal armies occupied large areas of the South, the Proclamation became a practical reality, and hundreds of thousands of slaves were freed by its operation. Equally important in the process of emancipation was the induction of many former slaves into the armed forces: some 186,000 served as soldiers, sailors, and laborers, thereby making a substantial contribution to the freeing of their race. Furthermore, the impulse to abolition which the Proclamation symbolized increased in intensity throughout the country, affecting even the border states. Before the end of the war, slavery had been abolished in two Union slave states, Maryland and Missouri, and in three "reconstructed" or occupied Confederate states, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana. The final and inevitable action was taken early in 1865 when Congress approved the Thirteenth Amendment (ratified by the required number of states several months after the war closed), which freed all slaves everywhere and abolished slavery as an institution.

Early in the war, and particularly after the election of 1862, in which the Republicans suffered heavy losses, the party leaders proceeded to form a broad coalition of all groups who supported the war, trying particularly to attract

the War Democrats. The new organization, which was composed of a Republican core with a fringe of War Democrats, was known as the Union party. It encountered its major political test in the presidential election of 1864, which was the first national election held in the midst of a great war.

When the Union convention met in June, it nominated Lincoln, with the chilly assent of the Radicals, and, for Vice President, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, a War Democrat who had refused to follow his state into secession. In August the Democratic convention nominated George B. McClellan, former Union general and an object of hatred to all good Radicals. The peace faction got a plank into the platform denouncing the war as a failure and calling for a truce to be followed by an invitation to the South to enter a national convention. Although McClellan repudiated the plank, the Democrats stood before the country as the peace party. At the same time several Northern military victories, particularly the capture of Atlanta, Georgia, early in September, rejuvenated Northern morale and gave promise of Republican success in November.

The outcome of the election was a smashing electoral triumph for Lincoln, who got 212 votes to McClellan's 21 and carried every state except Kentucky, New Jersey, and Delaware. Lincoln's popular majority, however, was uncomfortably small, 2,213,000 to 1,805,000 or an advantage of only 400,000. A slight shift of popular votes in some of the more populous states would have changed the result.

## **The South Mobilizes**

Although the first seven Southern states to secede had left the Union as individual sovereignties, they intended from the first to come together in a common confederation, which they hoped the states of the upper South would eventually join. Accordingly, representatives of the seceded states assembled at Montgomery, Alabama, early in February 1862, to create a Southern nation. After Virginia seceded, the government moved to Richmond, partly out of deference to Virginia, partly because Richmond was one of the few Southern cities large enough to house the government.

### **THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT**

In the Confederate constitution, state sovereignty was expressly recognized, but not the right of secession. A few governmental reforms were introduced, such as the "item veto" — the President's power to veto part of a bill without rejecting the whole thing. Slavery was mentioned by name, and various provisions made its abolition (even by one of the states) practically impossible. In most other respects the constitution of the Confederate States was identical with that of the United States.

## An English View of Jefferson Davis

William Howard Russell, war correspondent for the *Times* of London, visited the Confederate President at Montgomery, Alabama, in 1861. Although the Britisher had some reservations about Davis, he was favorably impressed with his freedom from the almost universal American habit of chewing tobacco.

*I had an opportunity of observing the President very closely: he did not impress me as favorably as I had expected, though he is certainly a very different looking man from Mr. Lincoln. He is like a gentleman--has a slight, light figure, little exceeding middle height, and holds himself erect and straight. He was dressed in a rustic suit of slate-colored stuff, with a black silk handkerchief round his neck; his manner is plain, and rather reserved and drastic; his head is well formed, with a fine full forehead, square and high, covered with innumerable fine lines and wrinkles, features regular, though the cheekbones are too high, and the jaws too hollow to be handsome, the lips are thin, flexible, and curved, the chin square, well defined; the nose very regular, with wide nostrils, and the eyes deep-set, large and full--one seems nearly blind, and is partly covered with a film, owing to excruciating attacks of neuralgia and tic. Wonderful to relate, he does not chew, and is neat and clean-looking, with hair trimmed and boots brushed*

Besides framing a constitution and passing temporary laws, the Montgomery convention named a provisional President and a provisional Vice President, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia. Afterward, in a general election, the same two men were chosen, without opposition, for regular six-year terms. Davis had been a firm but not extreme advocate of Southern rights in the former Union; he was a moderate but not an extreme secessionist. Stephens had been the chief among those who had contended that secession was unnecessary.

Jefferson Davis embodied the spirit of the nation he had been called to lead. His family, which was of Southern yeoman stock, had moved from Kentucky, where he was born, to the new lush cotton lands of Mississippi, where they became rich planters almost overnight. Davis was a first-generation aristocrat. So also were most of the members of his government. The Confederacy was run by the cotton nabobs of the newer "Western" South, not by the old aristocracy of the seaboard states.

Whereas Lincoln's task was to preserve a nation, Davis' was to make one. Lincoln succeeded; Davis failed. He spent too much time on routine items, on what one observer called "little trash." A good administrator, he was his own secretary of war, but he rarely rose above the secretarial level. Moreover, he proceeded

on the assumption that the Confederacy was a legal and permanent organization that could fight a war in the normal fashion of older countries. The situation demanded ruthless efficiency, yet he tried to observe every constitutional punctilio. Lincoln, without clear constitutional sanction, suspended *habeas corpus*; Davis asked his Congress to let him suspend it and received only partial permission. One shrewd Confederate official (R. G. H. Kean) wrote: "All the revolutionary vigor is with the enemy. . . . With us timidity--hair splitting."

The Confederate cabinet displayed, at best, only average ability. The personnel changed rapidly and frequently. There were three secretaries of state, two secretaries of the treasury, four attorney generals, and five secretaries of war. Not one of them ever dared to oppose the will of President Davis.

## MONEY AND MEN

In contrast to the burgeoning prosperity of the wartime North, the South in the war years underwent shortages, suffering, and sacrifice. The Southern economy, despite a frantic expansion of industrial facilities, was unable to supply the needs of its armies and civilian population.

The men seeking to devise measures for financing the Confederacy's war effort, Secretary of the Treasury Christopher G. Memminger and the congressional leaders, had to reckon with a number of hard facts. A national revenue system had to be created to collect money from a people unaccustomed to bearing large tax burdens. Southern banking houses, except in New Orleans, were fewer and smaller than those of the North. Because excess capital in the South was usually invested in slaves and land, the sum of liquid assets on deposit in banks or in individual hands was relatively small. The only specie possessed by the government was that seized in United States mints located in the South (amounting to about \$1 million). In an attempt to secure more specie, the government dispatched an army column into New Mexico, but this force, after some initial success, was repelled.

The Confederate Congress, like its counterpart in the North, showed some reluctance to enact rigorous wartime taxes. In 1861 the legislators provided for a direct tax on property to be levied through the medium of the states. If a state preferred, it could meet its quota by paying as a state. Most of the states, instead of taxing their people, assumed the tax, which they paid by issuing bonds or their own notes. Moving more boldly in 1863, Congress passed a bill that included license levies and an income tax. A unique feature was "the tax in kind." Every farmer and planter had to contribute one-tenth of his produce to the government. All together, the revenue realized from taxation was relatively small—only about 1 percent of total income.

The borrowing record of the Confederacy was little better than its tax program. Eventually the government issued bonds in such large amounts that the people suspected its ability to redeem them. Congress authorized a \$100 million loan to be paid in specie, paper money, or produce. The expectation was that the bulk of the proceeds would be in the form of products—"the loan in kind." The loan was subscribed, partly in paper currency and mostly in produce or pledges of produce. But many of the pledges were not redeemed, and often the promised products were destroyed by the enemy. The Confederacy also attempted to borrow money in Europe by pledging cotton stored in the South for future delivery. Its most notable venture in foreign finance was the famous

Erlanger loan, which was supposed to net \$15 million. Actually, Erlanger, a French financier, was interested in conducting a huge cotton speculation. The Confederate government received only \$2.5 million from the loan.

Since ready revenue was needed and since cash was scarce, the government resorted to the issuance of paper money and treasury notes in 1861. Once it started, it could not stop. By 1864 the staggering total of \$1 billion had been issued. In addition, states and cities issued their own notes. The inevitable result was to depreciate the value of the money. Prices skyrocketed to astronomical heights. Many people, particularly those who lived in towns or who had fixed incomes, could not pay these prices. Such people often lost some of their will to fight.

Like the United States, the Confederate States first raised armies by calling for volunteers. By the latter part of 1861 volunteering had dropped off badly. As the year 1862 opened, the Confederacy was threatened by a manpower crisis.

The government met the situation boldly. At Davis' recommendation, Congress in April enacted the First Conscription Act, which declared that all able-bodied white males between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five were liable to military service for three years. A man who was drafted could escape his summons if he furnished a substitute to go in his place. The prices for substitutes eventually went up to as high as \$10,000 in Confederate currency. The purpose of this provision was to exempt men in charge of agricultural and industrial production, but to people who could not afford substitutes it seemed like a special privilege to the rich. It was repealed late in 1863 after arousing bitter class discontent.

The first draft act and later measures provided for other exemptions, mostly on an occupational basis. The government realized that conscription had to be selective, that some men had to be left on the home front to perform the functions of production. It erred in excusing men who were not doing any vital services and in permitting too many group exemptions. The provision most bitterly criticized was that exempting one white man on each plantation with twenty or more slaves. Angrily denounced as the "twenty-nigger law," it caused ordinary men to say: "It's a rich man's war but a poor man's fight."

In September 1862 Congress adopted a second conscription measure, which raised the upper age limit to forty-five. At the end of the year, an estimated 500,000 soldiers were in the Confederate armies. Thereafter conscription provided fewer and fewer men, and the armed forces steadily decreased in size. Federal armies seized large areas in the South, depriving the Confederacy of manpower in the occupied regions. Military reverses in the summer of 1863 convinced many Southerners that the war was lost, causing a kind of passive resistance to the draft as men sought to avoid it by hiding in the hills and woods, and desertions began to increase.

As 1864 opened, the situation was critical. In a desperate move, Congress lowered the age limits for drafted men to seventeen and raised them to fifty, reaching out, it was said, toward the cradle and the grave. Few men were obtained. War weariness and the certainty of defeat were making their influence felt. In 1864-1865 there were 100,000 desertions. An observant Confederate diarist (Mrs. Mary B. Chesnut) wrote in her journal in March 1865: "I am sure our army is silently dispersing. Men are moving the wrong way, all the time. They slip by with no songs and no shouts now. They have given the thing up." In a frantic final attempt to raise men, Congress in 1865 authorized the drafting of 300,000 slaves. The war ended before this incongruous experiment could be tried out.

### **STATE RIGHTS IN THE CONFEDERACY**

In overwhelming numbers the Southern people were ready to support the war for Southern independence. The only important organized opposition to the war came from the inhabitants of the mountain areas, whose population was less than 10 percent of the Southern total. Here supporters of the national cause carried

on a kind of guerrilla warfare against the occupying Confederate forces until liberated by the Federals late in 1863.

Though united in their desire to sustain the war, Southerners were bitterly divided on how it should be conducted. The differences that emerged did not take the form of party issues: the Confederacy did not last long enough for distinct parties to develop.

The great dividing force was, ironically enough, the principle of state rights—the foundation of Southern political philosophy—for whose conservation and consecration the South had left the old Union. State rights had become such a cult with Southerners that they reacted against all central controls, even those necessary to win the war. If there was an organized faction of opposition to the government, it was that group of quixotic men who counted Vice President Stephens as their leader. They had one simple, basic idea. They wanted the Confederacy to win its independence, but they would not agree to sacrificing one iota of state sovereignty to achieve that goal. If victory had to be gained at the expense of state rights, they preferred defeat. The state-righters concentrated their criticisms upon two powers that the central government sought to exercise: the suspension of habeas corpus, and conscription. Recalcitrant governors, like Joseph Brown of Georgia and Zebulon M. Vance of North Carolina, contending that the central government had no right to draft troops, tried in every way to obstruct the enforcement of conscription.

The idea of a negotiated peace fascinated the state-righters, especially Vice President Stephens. They never made it clear whether they were thinking of reunion or of Southern independence. As early as 1863 they urged a peace based on recognition of state sovereignty and the right of each state to control its domestic institutions—which implied a restored Union. At times, however, they proposed negotiations based on the independence of the Confederacy.

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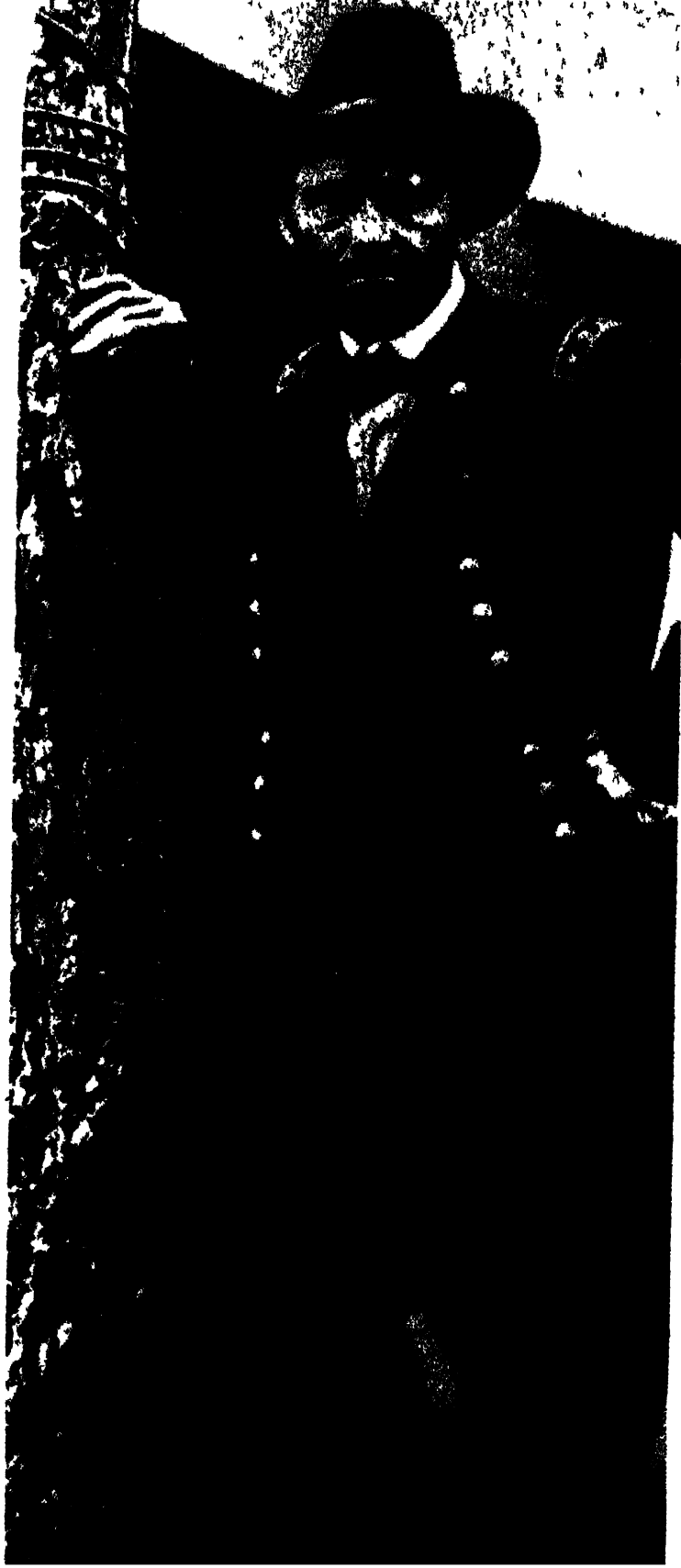
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# The War of the Rebellion





## Fifteen

From the seceders' point of view, the Civil War was a war for Southern independence. Afterward (but not at the time) Southerners were to call it "the War between the States," thus implying that secession and resistance to federal authority had been legitimate constitutional exercise of state rights. Yet the Southerners both during and after the fighting were proud to call themselves "rebels," and from the Northern point of view they were certainly engaging in rebellion as well as war. The official name that the Union government gave the conflict was "the War of the Rebellion."

This was the first great military experience of the American people. Compared to it the earlier wars—the one with Mexico, the War of 1812, even the Revolutionary struggle itself—were minor and episodic. It has been called the first of modern wars. It involved new uses of men and new kinds of technology: railroads and railroad artillery, the telegraph, armored ships, balloons, the Gatling gun, precursor of the machine gun, repeating rifles, trenches, wire entanglements, water and land mines (including what then were called "infernal machines," and now would be known as "booby traps"), torpedo boat, even submarines. It compelled both sides to concentrate a high proportion of their resources on the pursuit of total victory.

For the American people, Northern and Southern, of both the warring generation and later generations, the Civil War was the most dramatic and traumatic event in their history. More than most wars, it settled some

### **The North's Greatest General**

*One observer of Ulysses S. Grant said "He habitually wears an expression as if he had determined to drive his head through a brick wall" and was about to do it." Of average height and small stature, slouchy in dress and manner, Grant did not look like a great general, but he was, as C. F. Adams, Jr., noted, the kind of man that all would instinctively turn to in a moment of crisis (Left, Library of Congress)*

### **The South's Greatest General**

*Robert E. Lee was a magnificent physical figure. Five feet eleven inches tall and 175 pounds in weight, he seemed larger than he was because of his massive head and wide shoulders. He was grave and reserved in manner like George Washington, his hero and model. And like Washington, he lived by a self-imposed code of high conduct. "Duty is the sublimest word in our language," he once wrote. (Right, National Archives)*

issues and settled them permanently. It brought about the destruction of slavery and the preservation of the Union. After the Union victory no class or faction or section could seriously consider secession as a feasible step.

In the war's aftermath, however, difficult problems emerged to test the statesmanship of both the victors and the vanquished. What should be the status of the 4 million emancipated slaves? Upon what terms and by what process should the states of the

defeated Confederacy be restored to the Union?

Thus, while the victory had decided that no state could secede and that no man could own another as his slave, it had not settled the question of the precise relationship of the states to the Union or of the blacks to the whites. These questions remained, and in one form or another they still remain, the most perplexing and tormenting issues of American life more than a century after the end of the Civil War.

## Strategy and Diplomacy

So far as strategic planning was concerned, the objectives of the Union were positive and those of the Confederacy negative. To achieve a victory, the Union had to conquer the rebels and reduce them to subjection, to obedience to federal law. The Confederacy had only to stave off defeat.

In diplomacy—in relations with European powers—it was the other way around. The objectives of the Confederacy were positive and those of the Union negative. The Confederacy hoped to persuade foreign governments to recognize its independence and to step into the war and help make that independence a reality. The Union aimed to prevent foreign recognition and intervention.

### THE COMMANDERS IN CHIEF

It was the responsibility of the President as commander in chief of the army and navy—of Abraham Lincoln for the Union and Jefferson Davis for the Confederacy—to see to the making and carrying out of an overall strategy for winning the war. Lincoln, a civilian all his life, had had no military education and no military experience except for a brief militia interlude. Yet he became a great war President, and a great commander in chief, superior to Davis, who was a trained soldier. Lincoln made himself a fine strategist, often showing keener insight than his generals. He recognized that numbers and matériel were on his side, and

immediately he moved to mobilize the maximum strength of Northern resources. He urged his generals to keep up a constant pressure on the whole defensive line of the Confederacy until a weak spot was found and a breakthrough could be made. At an early date he realized that the proper objective of his armies was the destruction of the Confederate armies and not the occupation of Southern territory.

During the first three years of the war, Lincoln performed many of the functions that in a modern command system would be done by the chief of the general staff or the joint chiefs of staff. He formulated policy, devised strategic plans, and even directed tactical movements. Some of his decisions were wise, some wrong, but the general effect of his so-called interfering with the military machine was fortunate for the North.

At the beginning, Lincoln was inclined to take the advice of General Winfield Scott. The old general, however, was unable to adjust his thinking to the requirements of mass war. He retired from service on November 1, 1861, and as general in chief, Lincoln replaced Scott with young George B. McClellan, who was also the commander of the Federal field army in the East, the Army of the Potomac. McClellan lacked the abilities to formulate strategy for all theaters of the war. The one grand strategic design he submitted was defective because it envisioned operations in only one theater, his own, and because it made places instead of enemy armies his objective. When McClellan



took the field in March 1862, Lincoln removed him as general in chief. In July Lincoln designated General Henry W. Halleck to direct the armies. The foremost American student of the art of war, Halleck had won an undeserved reputation as a successful general in the West. Now he cast himself in the role of an adviser instead of a maker of decisions. Again Lincoln himself was forced to take up the function of forming and directing strategy, a task that he performed until March 1864, when the nation finally achieved a modern command system.

In the system arrived at in 1864, Ulysses S. Grant, who had emerged as the North's greatest general, was named general in chief. Charged with directing the movements of all Union armies, Grant, because he disliked the political atmosphere of Washington, established his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac but did not technically become commander of that army. As director of the armies, Grant proved to be the man for whom Lincoln had been searching. He possessed in superb degree the ability to think of the war in overall terms and to devise strategy for the war as a whole. Because Lincoln trusted Grant, he gave the general a relatively free hand. Grant, however, always submitted the broad outlines of his plans to the President for approval before putting them in motion. Under the new arrangement, Halleck became "chief of staff," a post in which he acted as a channel of communication between Lincoln and Grant and between Grant and the departmental commanders.

Lincoln's active command role underlines one of the most important changes occurring in modern warfare: the emergence of the civilian in strategic planning. As war became more technological and total, strategy became a problem of directing the whole resources of a nation. It was too vast a problem for any one set of leaders, especially for the military.

The most dramatic example of civilian intervention in military affairs was the Committee on the Conduct of the War, a joint investigative committee of both houses of Congress and the most powerful agency that the legislative branch has ever created to secure for itself a voice in formulating war policies. Established in December 1861, under the chairmanship of Senator Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio, it became the spearhead of the Radical attack on Lincoln's war program. The Radicals sensed that

many of the Northern generals were not animated by a driving, ruthless desire for victory. The generals at first were influenced by the eighteenth-century concept of war as a kind of game—as chessboard maneuvers conducted in leisurely fashion and without heavy casualties. The Radicals ascribed the generals' hesitancy to a secret sympathy for slavery, which the professionals were supposed to have imbibed at West Point. The generals whom the committee favored—most of them incompetent amateurs—would have been no improvement, but the spirit represented by the committee helped to infuse a hard, relentless purpose into the conduct of the war.

Southern command arrangements centered on President Davis. The Confederacy failed to achieve a modern command system. Early in 1862 Davis assigned General Robert E. Lee to duty at Richmond, where, "under the direction of the President," he was "charged" with the conduct of the Confederate armies. Despite the fine words, this meant only that Lee, who had a brilliant military mind, was to act as Davis' adviser, furnishing counsel when called on. After serving a few months, Lee went into the field, and Davis did not appoint another adviser until February 1864. Then he selected Braxton Bragg, whom he had been forced to remove from field command after Bragg was defeated in the West. Bragg had real strategic ability, but he understood his position and restricted his function to providing technical advice. In February 1865 the Confederate Congress, in a move directed at Davis, created the position of general in chief, which was intended for Lee. Davis named Lee to the post but took care to announce that legally he himself was still commander in chief. Lee accepted the job on the basis offered by the President: as a loyal subordinate instead of the dictator some people wanted him to be. The war ended before the new command experiment could be fully tested.

## THE ROLE OF SEA POWER

The Union had the advantage of overwhelmingly preponderant sea power, and President Lincoln made the most of it. It served two main functions. One was to enforce the blockade of

the Southern coast that he proclaimed at the start of the war (April 19, 1861). The other was to assist the Union armies in combined land-and-water operations.

In the Western theater of war, the vast region between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, the larger rivers were navigable by vessels of considerable size. The Union navy helped the armies to conquer this area by transporting supplies and troops for them and joining them in attacking Confederate strong points. In defending themselves against the Union gunboats on the rivers, the Confederates had to depend mainly on land fortifications because of their lack of naval power. These fixed defenses proved no match

for the mobile land-and-water forces of the Union.

At first, the blockade was too large a task for the Union navy. Even after the navy had grown to its maximum size, it was unable to seal off completely the long shoreline of the Confederacy. Though ocean-going ships were kept away, small blockade runners continued to carry goods into and out of some of the Southern ports. Gradually the Federal forces tightened the blockade by occupying stretches of the coast and seizing one port after another, the last remaining important one (Wilmington, North Carolina) early in 1865. Fewer and fewer blockade runners got through, and the blockade increasingly hurt the South.

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#### **The Battle of Mobile Bay**

*To strengthen the blockade, the Union navy attempted to capture Confederate ports. The port of Mobile was defended not only by warships but also by land fortifications and underwater torpedoes, or mines. "Damn the torpedoes! Full steam ahead!" Admiral David G. Farragut cried as he directed his flotilla in a victorious mission into Mobile Bay, August 5, 1864. Here he fearlessly watches as his flagship, the Hartford, brushes past the hostile Tennessee in an artistic re-creation by William H. Overend. (Courtesy Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford)*



In bold and ingenious attempts to break the blockade, the Confederates introduced some new weapons, among them an ironclad warship. They constructed this by plating with iron a former United States frigate, the *Merrimack*, which the Yankees had scuttled in Norfolk harbor when Virginia seceded. On March 8, 1862, the *Merrimack* steamed out from Norfolk to attack the blockading squadron of wooden ships in Hampton Roads. She destroyed two of the ships and scattered the rest. Jubilation reigned in Richmond, and consternation in Washington. But the federal government had already placed orders for the construction of several ironclads of its own, which had been designed by John Ericsson. One of these, the *Monitor*, arrived at Hampton Roads on the night of March 8. When the *Merrimack* emerged on the following day to hunt for more victims, the *Monitor* met her and engaged her in the first battle between ironclad ships. Neither vessel was able to penetrate the other's armor, but the *Monitor* put an end to the depredations of the *Merrimack*.

The Confederates later experimented with other new kinds of craft in the effort to pierce the blockade. One of these was a torpedo boat, which carried the torpedo (mine) on a long pole projecting out in front. Another was a small, cigar-shaped, hand-powered submarine. In 1864, in Charleston harbor, such a submarine, pulling its mine behind it on a cable, dived under a blockading vessel, exploded the mine against the hull, and then was dragged to the bottom by the sinking ship. For the first time in the history of warfare, a submarine had made a successful strike. This and other ingenious efforts, however, fell far short of breaking or even weakening the blockade.

To weaken it, the Confederates had meanwhile decided to build or buy fast ships to prey on the Northern merchant marine on the high seas. The hope was that the Union would detach ships from the blockade to pursue the commerce raiders. The Confederates also hoped to get, from abroad, a specially built "ram" with which to smash the wooden blockading ships. As a result of these efforts, the naval war became an important element in the relations of the Union with the Confederacy, on the one hand, and with the powers of Europe on the other.

## EUROPE AND THE DISUNITED STATES

Judah P. Benjamin, who occupied the Confederate foreign office for the greater part of the war, was a clever and intelligent man, but he lacked strong convictions and confined most of his energy to administrative routine. Seward, on the other hand, after some initial blunders, learned his job well and went on to become one of the outstanding American secretaries of state. In the key diplomatic post at London, the North was represented by a distinguished minister, Charles Francis Adams, who seemed to have inherited the diplomatic abilities of his father (John Quincy Adams) and grandfather (John Adams).

In the relationship of Europe to the Civil War, the key nations were Great Britain and France. These two had acted together against Russia in the Crimean War and were united by an entente, one of the understandings of which was that questions concerning the United States fell within the sphere of British influence. Napoleon III, therefore, would not act in American affairs without the concurrence of Britain. Russia, the third power of Europe, was, like the United States, an up-and-coming nation that thought her aspirations were being blocked by England. Feeling a community of interest with democratic America, autocratic Russia openly expressed sympathy for the Northern cause. In 1863, when war threatened to break out between Russia and England over Poland, Russia, in order to get her navy into position to attack British commerce, dispatched two fleets to American waters. One turned up at New York and the other at San Francisco, thereby creating a legend that they had come to support the United States if England and France should attempt to break the blockade.

At the beginning of the war the sympathies of the ruling classes of England and France were with the Confederacy. But English liberals like John Bright and Richard Cobden saw the war as a struggle between free and slave labor, and they presented it in these terms to their followers. The politically conscious but unenfranchised workers in Britain expressed their sympathy for the Northern cause frequently and unmistakably—in mass meetings,

in resolutions, and, through the medium of Bright and other leaders, in Parliament itself. After the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, these groups intensified their activities on behalf of the Union cause.

In the minds of Southern leaders, cotton was their best diplomatic weapon. Their analysis was as follows: the textile industry was basic to the economies of England and France, which depended on the South for the bulk of their cotton supply; deprived of Southern cotton, these countries would face economic collapse. Therefore they would have to intervene on the side of the Confederacy.

But this diplomacy based on King Cotton never worked as its champions envisioned. In 1861 English manufacturers had a surplus of cotton on hand. The immediate effect of the blockade was to enable the textile operators to dispose of their remaining finished goods at high prices. Thereafter the supply became increasingly short, and many mills were forced to close. Both England and France, however, managed to avoid a complete shutdown of their textile industries by importing supplies from new sources, notably Egypt and India. Most important of all, the workers, the people most seriously affected by the shortage, did not clamor to have the blockade broken. Even the 500,000 English textile workers thrown out of jobs continued to support the North.

No European nation extended diplomatic recognition to the Confederacy. Though several times England and France considered offering mediation, they never moved to intervene in the war. Neither could afford to do so unless the Confederacy seemed on the point of winning, and the South never attained a prospect of certain victory.

Immediately after the outbreak of hostilities, Great Britain issued a proclamation of neutrality, thus attributing to the Confederacy the status of a belligerent. France and other nations followed suit. Although the Northern government, which officially insisted that the war was not a war but a domestic insurrection, furiously resented England's action, the British government had proceeded in conformity with accepted rules of neutrality and in accordance with the realities of the situation. The United States was fighting a war, a fact that Lincoln himself had recognized in his proclamation establishing a blockade. Thereafter three crises

or near crises between Great Britain and the United States developed, any one of which could have resulted in war between the two countries.

The first crisis, and the most dangerous one—the so-called *Trent* affair—occurred late in 1861. The Confederate commissioners to England and France, James M. Mason and John Slidell, had slipped through the then ineffective blockade to Havana, Cuba, where they boarded an English steamer, the *Trent*, for England. Hovering in Cuban waters was an American frigate, the *San Jacinto*, commanded by Captain Charles Wilkes, an impetuous officer who knew that the Southern diplomats were on the *Trent*. Acting without authorization from his government, Wilkes stopped the British vessel, arrested the commissioners, and bore them off in triumph to Boston. The British government drafted a demand for the release of the prisoners, reparation, and an apology. Lincoln and Seward, well aware that war with England would be suicidal, spun out the negotiations until American opinion had cooled off, then returned the commissioners with an indirect apology.

The second issue—the case of the Confederate commerce destroyers—generated a long-lasting diplomatic problem. Lacking the resources to construct the vessels, the Confederacy contracted to have them built and equipped in British shipyards. Six cruisers, of which the most famous were the *Alabama*, the *Florida*, and the *Shenandoah*, were sold to the Confederacy. The British government knew what was going on, being regularly and indignantly informed by Minister Adams, but winked at the practice. The United States protested that it was in violation of the laws of neutrality. The protests formed the basis, after the war, for damage claims which the United States served on Great Britain.

The third incident—the affair of the *Laird rams*—could have developed into a crisis, but did not because the British government suddenly decided to mend its ways. In 1863 the Confederacy placed an order from the *Laird* shipyards for two powerful ironclads with pointed prows for ramming and sinking Union vessels and thus breaking the blockade. Adams was instructed to inform the British that if the rams, or any other ships destined for the Confederacy, left port, then there would be danger

of war. Even before Adams delivered his message, the British government acted to detain the rams and to prevent the Confederacy from obtaining any other ships.

If Napoleon III had had his way, France and England would have intervened at an early date. Unable to persuade Britain to act, he had to content himself with expressing sympathy for the Southern cause and permitting the Confederates to order commerce destroyers from French shipyards. The Emperor's primary motive for desiring an independent South was his ambition to establish French colonial

power in the Western hemisphere: a divided America could not block his plans. He seized the opportunity of the war to set up a French-dominated empire in Mexico.

Napoleon's Mexican venture was a clear violation of the Monroe Doctrine, perhaps the greatest one that had ever occurred. The United States viewed it in such a light, but for fear of provoking France into recognizing the Confederacy, it could do no more than register a protest. Only after the Civil War was ended did the United States feel strong enough to put pressure on France to get out of Mexico.

## Campaigns and Battles

Since the powers of Europe refrained from direct intervention in the war, the two contestants in America were left to fight it out on their own.

### THE OPENING CLASHES 1861

The year 1861 witnessed several small battles that accomplished large results and one big battle that had no important outcome. The small engagements occurred in Missouri and in western Virginia, the mountainous region that shortly would become the state of West Virginia.

In Missouri the contending forces were headed on the one hand by Governor Claiborne Jackson and other state officials, who wanted to take the state out of the Union, and on the other by Captain (later General) Nathaniel Lyon, commanding a small regular army force at St. Louis. Lyon led his column into southern Missouri, where he was defeated and killed by a superior Confederate force at the Battle of Wilson's Creek (August 10). He had, however, seriously blunted the striking power of the Confederates, and Union forces were able to hold most of the state.

Into western Virginia came a Federal force that had been assembled in Ohio under the command of George B. McClellan. Crossing the Ohio River, the invaders succeeded by the end of the year in "liberating" the mountain people. Although possession of the region placed the

Federals on the flank of Virginia, they could not, because of the transportation obstacles presented by the mountains, use it as a base from which to move eastward. The occupation of western Virginia was, however, an important propaganda victory for the North: a Union-sympathizing area in the Confederacy had been wrenched from Southern control.

The one big battle of the year was fought in Virginia in the area between the two capitals. On the Virginia front the Federals occupied three positions. A small force held Fort Monroe on the coast between the York and James rivers. Just south of Washington was an army of over 30,000 under the command of General Irvin McDowell. In the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley (usually called in Civil War literature simply the Valley) were 14,000 Federals commanded by General Robert Patterson, a venerable veteran of the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Confronting the semicircle of Union armies were three Confederate armies: a small force opposite Fort Monroe; an army of over 20,000 under P. G. T. Beauregard based at Manassas in northern Virginia about thirty miles southwest of Washington; and 9,000 troops in the Valley, commanded by Joseph E. Johnston.

The Federals had larger forces in Virginia than the Confederates, and if McDowell's army could knock out Beauregard's (the principle Confederate force), the war might be ended immediately. The problem was to prevent other Confederate forces from coming to

Beauregard's aid. The plan, as worked out, called for Patterson to contain Johnston so that McDowell could deal with Beauregard alone. But Patterson failed.

In mid-July McDowell marched his inexperienced troops toward Manassas, his movement well advertised to the Confederates by Northern newspapers and Southern spies. Beauregard retired behind Bull Run, a small stream north of Manassas, and called on the government to order Johnston to join him. Most of Johnston's army reached Beauregard the day before the battle, making the Northern and Southern armies approximately equal in size, each numbering something over 30,000.

The Battle of Bull Run, or Manassas (July 21), might be summarized by saying that Beauregard never got his offensive into motion and that McDowell's attack almost succeeded. The Confederates stopped a last strong Union assault. Beauregard then ordered a counterattack. As the Confederates slashed forward, a sudden wave of panic struck through the Union troops, wearied after hours of hot, hard fighting and demoralized by the abrupt change of events. They gave way and crossed Bull Run in a rout. Unable to get them in hand north of the stream, McDowell had to order a retreat to Washington.

The Confederates, as disorganized by victory as the Federals were by defeat, and lacking supplies and transport, were in no condition to undertake a forward movement. Lincoln replaced McDowell with General McClellan, the victor of the fighting in western Virginia, and took measures to increase the army. Both sides girded themselves for real war.

## **THE WESTERN THEATER 1862**

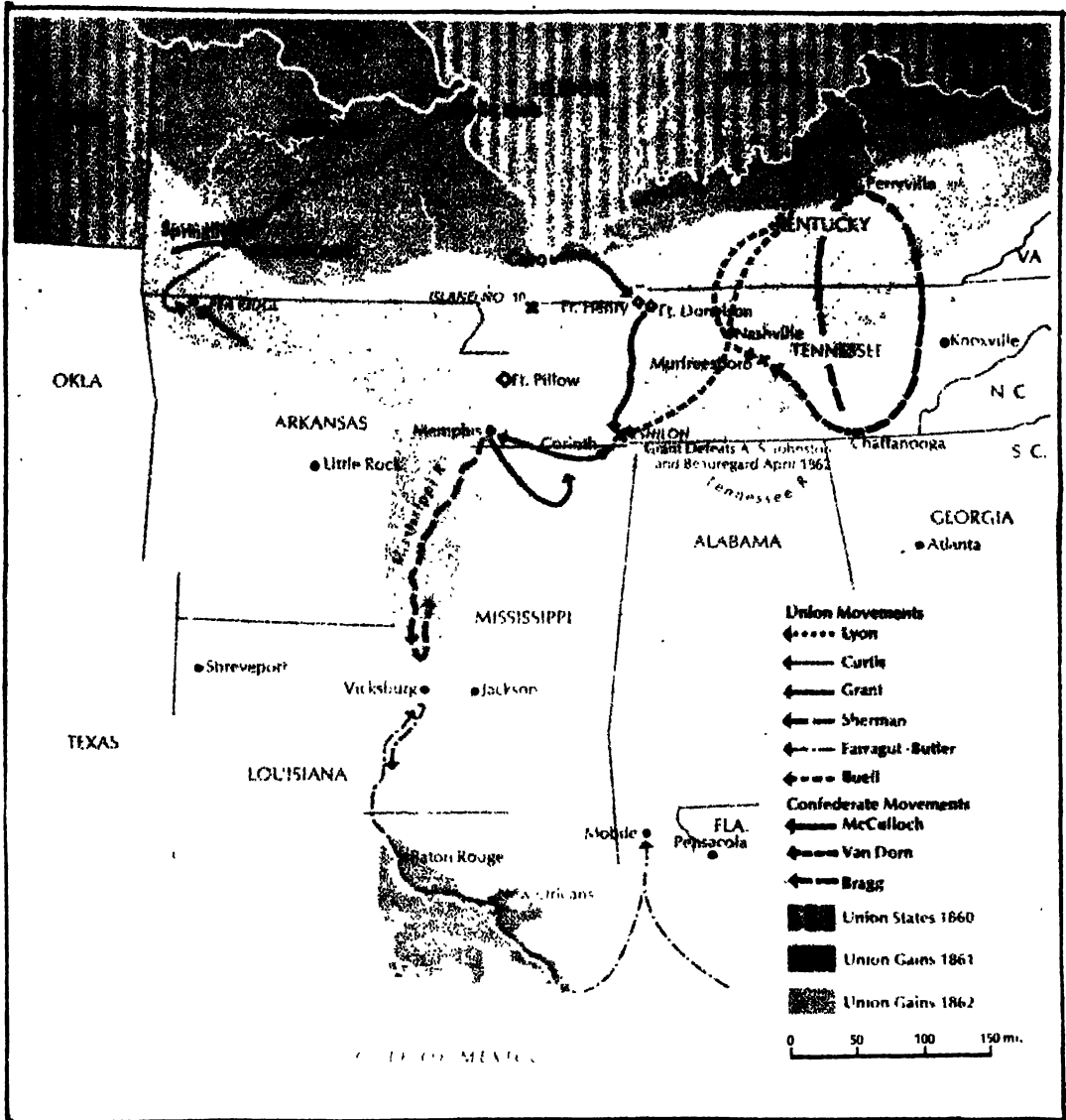
The first decisive operations in 1862 were in the Western theater. Here the Federals were trying to secure control of the Mississippi line by moving on the river itself or parallel to it. Most of their offensives were combined land-and-naval operations. To achieve their objective, the Federals advanced on the Mississippi from the north and south, moving down from Kentucky and up from the Gulf of Mexico toward New Orleans.

In April a Union squadron of ironclads and wooden vessels commanded by David G. Far-

ragut, destined to be the first American admiral, appeared in the Gulf. Smashing past the weak forts near the mouth of the river, Farragut ran up to New Orleans, defenseless because the Confederate high command had expected the attack to come from above, and forced the civil authorities to surrender the city (April 28–May 1). For the rest of the war the Federals held New Orleans and the southern part of Louisiana. They closed off the mouth of the great river to Confederate trade, grasped the South's largest city and greatest banking center, and secured a base for future operations.

Federal land forces in the West, meanwhile, were under the direction of two departmental commanders. One army, with its base at Louisville, was led by General Don Carlos Buell. West of the Mississippi, Henry W. Halleck, with headquarters in St. Louis, was in command. An army subject to Halleck's control was stationed in western Kentucky under Ulysses S. Grant. All Confederate troops in the West were under the command of one general, Albert Sidney Johnston. A fatal weakness marked the Confederate line in Kentucky. The center, through which flowed the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, was thrown back (southward) from the flanks, and was defended by two forts, Henry on the Tennessee and Donelson on the Cumberland. The forts had been built when Kentucky was trying to maintain a position of neutrality, and were located just over the Tennessee line. If the Federals, with the aid of naval power, could pierce the center, they would be between the two Confederate flanks and in position to destroy either.

This was exactly what the Federals did in February. Grant secured permission from Halleck to attack Fort Henry, whose defenders, awed by the ironclad river boats accompanying the Union army, surrendered with almost no resistance (February 6). Grant then marched to Donelson while his naval auxiliary moved to the Cumberland River. At Donelson the Confederates put up a scarp, but eventually the garrison of 20,000 had to capitulate (February 16). Grant, by the simple process of cracking the Confederate center and placing himself astride the river communications, had inflicted a near disaster on the Confederacy. As a result of his movement, the Confederates were forced out of Kentucky and had to yield half of Tennessee.



**The War in the West 1861-1862**

Halleck now ordered Grant, with about 40,000 troops, to proceed up the Tennessee (southward), and directed Buell, who had occupied Nashville, to march to join Grant. The immediate objective was to destroy Confederate railroad communications in the Corinth, Mississippi, area. Grant debarked his army at Pittsburg Landing, about thirty miles from Corinth. At the latter place, Johnston and Beauregard decided that their only chance to retrieve the recent reverses was to smash Grant before

he was joined by Buell. Early in April they moved, 40,000 strong, toward Pittsburg Landing to attack the Federals, who were encamped between two streams flowing into the Tennessee. The battle that ensued (April 6-7) is usually known as Shiloh. The Confederates caught Grant by surprise, and by the end of the first day's fighting drove him back to the river, but here the attack was halted. At the height of the battle Johnston was killed, and Beauregard assumed command. The next day Grant, rein-

forced by 25,000 of Buell's troops, went over to the offensive, and regained his original lines. Beauregard then disengaged, and withdrew to Corinth. In the tactical sense, Shiloh was an extremely narrow Union victory. The most important result was strategic in nature: the Confederates had failed to prevent a concentration of the Federal armies.

After Shiloh, Halleck, bringing reinforcements with him, came to Pittsburg Landing to personally direct the advance on Corinth. Moving with excessive caution, he took almost a month to reach the town and to place his army in position to take it by siege. Beauregard, rather than risk the certain entrapment of his forces, wisely evacuated his lines. The Federals now had Corinth and the railroads of which it was the hub. Furthermore, by seizing areas parallel to the Mississippi, they flanked the Confederates out of their positions on the river. By early June the Federals had occupied the river line down as far as Memphis.

At this point Halleck was called to Washington to become general in chief. Before he left, he had assigned missions to Grant and Buell, who again became departmental commanders. To Grant, the best fighting Union general yet to appear, he gave the relatively unimportant task of guarding communications in western Tennessee and northern Mississippi. To Buell, who had done practically no fighting, he assigned the vital objective of seizing Chattanooga on the Tennessee line. For the next few months Grant did little except to repel a Confederate attempt to recover Corinth. Buell took his army to Nashville to prepare his offensive. The Confederate field army in Mississippi now commanded by Braxton Bragg (Davis had relieved Beauregard after the loss of Corinth), moved to Chattanooga, where it would be in position to undertake an offensive.

The Confederates held approximately the eastern half of Tennessee. Bragg's problem was to recover the rest of the state and, if possible, return the war to Kentucky. He was a brilliant strategist with a fatal weakness—he lacked the iron resolution to complete his plans. He now conceived a brilliant scheme. Instead of risking battle with Buell between Chattanooga and Nashville, he would rapidly invade Kentucky, forcing Buell to follow him out of Tennessee. If he could reach Kentucky first, he could place himself between Buell and

Louisville and force the Federals to fight on grounds of his own choosing. With Buell smashed, success would be at hand—Kentucky redeemed and the Western states open to invasion. Bragg did get to Kentucky first, he did stand between Buell and Louisville. But instead of fighting he withdrew. Buell went into the city and, reinforced, came out looking for Bragg. The two armies met at the indecisive Battle of Perryville (October 8), after which Bragg retired to Tennessee. Buell followed cautiously, and shortly the President relieved him. His successor was William S. Rosecrans. Toward the end of the year Bragg and Rosecrans, moving forward in simultaneous advances, came together in the hard-fought Battle of Murfreesboro or Stone's River (December 31–January 2). Again Bragg had to retire.

#### THE VIRGINIA FRONT 1862

In the Eastern theater in 1862 Union operations were directed by young George B. McClellan, commander of the Army of the Potomac and the most controversial general of the war. McClellan was a superb trainer of men but lacked the fighting instinct, necessary in a great captain, to commit his men to decisive battle.

During the winter of 1861–1862 McClellan had remained inactive, training his army of 150,000 men near Washington. He finally settled on a plan of operations for the spring campaign. Instead of striking for Richmond by moving southward from Washington, he would have the navy transport his army to Fort Monroe on the Virginia coast in the region between the York and James rivers known as the Peninsula. Late in March McClellan started putting his troops on transports to begin his Peninsula campaign. After the general himself had departed for Virginia, Lincoln decided, on the basis of good evidence, that McClellan had not complied with the directive to leave enough men to protect Washington. Accordingly, he ordered McDowell's corps of over 30,000 men, about to embark to join McClellan, to remain south of Washington.

McClellan was thus deprived of a substantial part of his army, leaving him with something over 100,000. He had, nevertheless, a decisive numerical superiority over the Con-



federates when he landed at Fort Monroe. By mid-May he was within twenty miles of Richmond, and by the latter part of the month he was approaching the gates of the city. He continued to press Lincoln to send McDowell to him, and finally the President agreed.

The Confederate high command (Davis and Lee) had misgivings about General Joseph E. Johnston's strategy of drawing McClellan closer to Richmond before fighting, and they were worried by the possibility that reinforcements, particularly McDowell's corps, might join McClellan. To prevent this, Lee devised a scheme which Davis approved. The commander of the Confederate forces in the Shenandoah Valley, Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson, was

directed to move northward, giving the impression that he meant to cross the Potomac. In the brilliant Valley campaign (May 4–June 9) Jackson attacked and defeated two separate Federal armies, then drove toward the northern end of the Valley. Partly to defend the approaches to Washington and partly to trap Jackson, Lincoln rushed forces to the Valley, including McDowell's corps. Jackson slipped back to safety before the various Union forces could converge on him. McDowell's troops were so fatigued by their long march that their movement to McClellan had to be suspended.

While these events were unfolding in the Valley, Johnston at last attacked McClellan at Fair Oaks or Seven Pines (May 31–June 1)

#### The Battle at Cedar Mountain

*On August 9, 1862—just a few weeks before suffering a disastrous defeat in the Second Battle of Bull Run—the Union army under John Pope attacked and drove off a larger Confederate force at Cedar Mountain, Virginia. In the Civil War, both sides often followed the traditional tactics of direct frontal assault in regular lines over open ground as illustrated here. Such tactics, with weapons of much greater range and accuracy than those used in previous wars, resulted in heavy casualties. The basic infantry weapon of the Civil War, the single-shot muzzle-loading Springfield rifle, could kill at half a mile. From a contemporary Currier and Ives lithograph. (Library of Congress)*





**After the Battle of Fredericksburg**

*On Marye's Heights, above the town, the Federals on December 13 1862, repeatedly attacked the Confederates, who were protected by natural fortifications. Many Union soldiers were trapped and killed in the Sunken Road on the hill as shown in this photograph by Mathew B Brady the greatest American photographer of the nineteenth century. The cameras of the time used wet plates that required fairly long exposures and had to be developed on the spot while still wet. It was almost impossible to take action pictures. (Library of Congress)*

The attack failed to budge McClellan, and Johnston was so seriously wounded that he had to relinquish the command. To replace him Davis named the man who would lead the Army of Northern Virginia for the rest of the war, Robert E. Lee.

Lee, a brilliant field commander, realized that the Confederacy could not win its independence merely by repelling offensives. It would have to destroy a Union army, and to achieve this purpose Lee was ready to risk something. Informed by his cavalry leader, J. E. B. Stuart, that one-third of McClellan's army was north of the Chickahominy and two-thirds south, Lee devised a daring plan. He would call Jackson from the Valley, bringing his army up to 85,000 (as compared to McClel-

lan's 100,000), mass his forces north of the Chickahominy, and fall on the exposed Union right and destroy it. Lee's thought was that then McClellan would retreat to the York River and that he could follow and smash him before he reached his base. The risk in the plan was that McClellan would discover he confronted only a small enemy force on his left and would move into Richmond.

The operation that followed, which involved several engagements, is known as the Battle of the Seven Days (June 25-July 1). It did not proceed as Lee expected. He drove back the Union right wing but was unable to destroy it. Then McClellan, instead of retiring to the York, abandoned his base there and headed southward for the James, where he

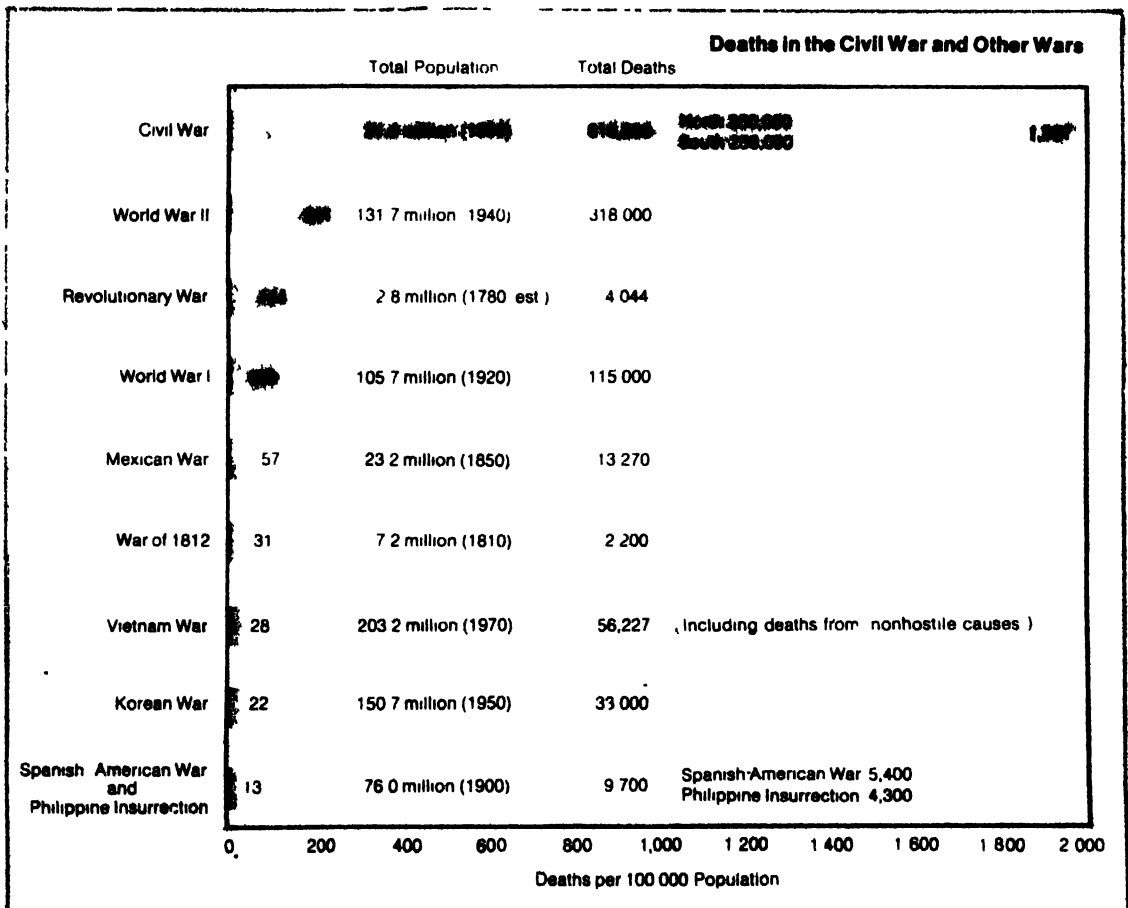
had asked the navy to set up a new base. Lee followed, trying desperately to destroy the Federals, but McClellan extricated his army, even inflicting a bloody repulse on Lee at Malvern Hill. He reached Harrison's Landing on the James, where with naval support, he was safe from any attack Lee could launch.

At Harrison's Landing the Federal army was only twenty-five miles from Richmond, and it had a secure line of water communications. But Lincoln, instead of replacing McClellan with a more aggressive commander, decided to evacuate the army to northern Virginia where it would be combined with a

smaller force under John Pope—in short, to begin a new operation on the Washington-to-Richmond “overland” route.

As the Army of the Potomac left the Peninsula by water, Lee, understanding what was happening, moved his army northward with the purpose of striking Pope before he was joined by McClellan. As Lee approached, Pope retired north of the Rappahannock River. Some units of McClellan's army had reached him, and, as it developed that he might be forced into a battle, others were sent on as soon as they arrived. By a brilliant stratagem, Lee passed part of his army to Pope's rear, drawing

*The death total for American soldiers was considerably higher in the Civil War than in any other war in which the United States has taken part. Considering the population of the country at the time, the Civil War total was proportionately even higher. (Many more Civil War soldiers died from disease than from battle action.) The proportion of war deaths to contemporary population, as shown in this chart, gives a truer conception of the seriousness of the losses in each war than do the absolute figures.*



the Federals north, and then followed with the remainder of his force. Pope, who was rash where McClellan was timid, was under the delusion that he faced only Jackson's corps. Although not all of McClellan's troops had joined him, he attacked the Confederates near Manassas: the Battle of Second Manassas or Second Bull Run (August 29-30). Lee easily halted the assault, and in a powerful counterstroke swept Pope from the field. The beaten Federals retired to the Washington defenses, where Lincoln relieved Pope and placed all the troops around the city under McClellan's command.

Lee gave the Federals no respite. Early in September he went over to the offensive, invading western Maryland. With some misgivings, Lincoln let McClellan go to meet Lee. As McClellan advanced, he had a wonderful piece of luck. He captured an order by Lee showing that the Confederate army was divided, a part of it under Jackson having gone to capture Harpers Ferry. McClellan's move was to advance rapidly and attack before the enemy could concentrate. But Lee had time to pull most of his army together behind Antietam Creek near the town of Sharpsburg. Here, on September 17, McClellan, with 87,000 men, threw a series of powerful attacks at Lee's 50,000. Late in the day it seemed that the Confederate line would break, but at this moment the rest of Jackson's troops arrived from Harpers Ferry to plug the hole. Even then McClellan might have won with one more assault. But his caution asserted itself, and he called off the battle. Lee retired to Virginia, and after an interval of reorganization McClellan followed. Lincoln, disgusted by McClellan's failure to exploit his victory, removed him from command in November. It was McClellan's last military appearance in the war.

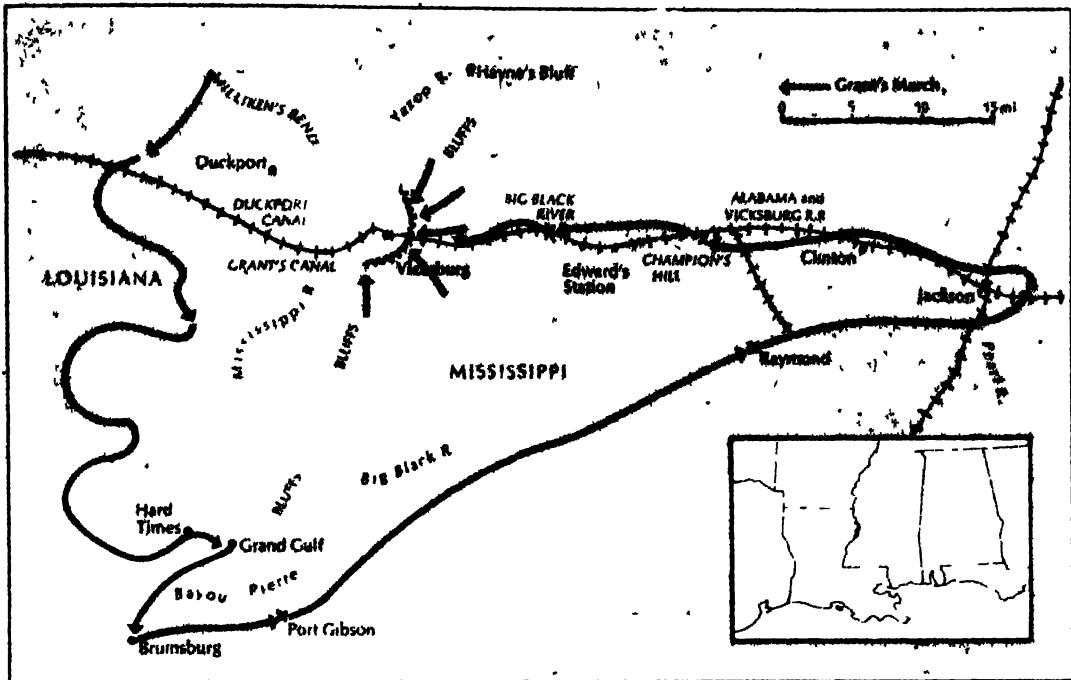
As McClellan's successor Lincoln appointed Ambrose E. Burnside, a modest mediocrity. Burnside thought that the government desired him to fight, and fight he would. He planned to drive at Richmond by crossing the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, the strongest defensive point on that river. On December 13 he flung his army at Lee's defenses in a hopeless, bloody attack. At the end of a day of bitter failure and after suffering 12,000 casualties, he withdrew to the north side of the Rappahannock. Soon he was relieved at his own request.

## YEAR OF DECISION 1863

As 1863 opened, the Union army in the East was commanded by Burnside's successor, Joseph Hooker—"Fighting Joe," as the newspapers called him. His army, which numbered 120,000, lay north of the Rappahannock opposite Fredericksburg. Hooker maneuvered opposite the town to hold Lee's attention, and crossed part of his army far up the Rappahannock. This flanking force came down on the south side, threatening to turn Lee's left. To complete his brilliant movement Hooker had only to push on to the open country around Fredericksburg—and he would have Lee in a vise. But Hooker lost his nerve. Now he hesitated, and fell back to a defensive position at Chancellorsville in the desolate area of scrub trees and brush known in Virginia as the Wilderness. Here Lee came up to attack him.

The Battle of Chancellorsville (May 1-5) was one of Lee's most brilliant exploits. With an army of only 60,000 (part of his force had been detached for other service), he took great but justified risks. Leaving a small force at Fredericksburg to contain the Federals at that point, he moved to confront Hooker. He divided his army and sent Jackson to hit the Union right, which was exposed, while he struck from in front. Finally Hooker, aided by a diversion from his troops at Fredericksburg, extricated his forces to the north side of the river. Again Lee had won, but not the decisive victory he had hoped for. And he had lost his ablest lieutenant. Jackson, wounded in the fighting, died soon afterward.

While the Federals were failing in the East, a different story was unfolding in the West, one that would influence future operations in the Eastern theater. Ulysses S. Grant was driving at Vicksburg, the most strongly fortified Confederate point on the Mississippi River. Coming down the river with naval support, he debarked his army on the Louisiana side above the city. From here he crossed to the east bank, and struck at the Confederate defenses, which were commanded by John C. Pemberton. He struck several blows, and each one failed. The terrain he was operating in north of Vicksburg was low, marshy, and laced by numerous streams and bayous, and it baffled every attempt of the army and navy to traverse it. Grant had little confidence that any of his



**Vicksburg Campaign 1863**

moves would succeed; he was keeping his forces busy until the spring, when he intended to try another route to the city.

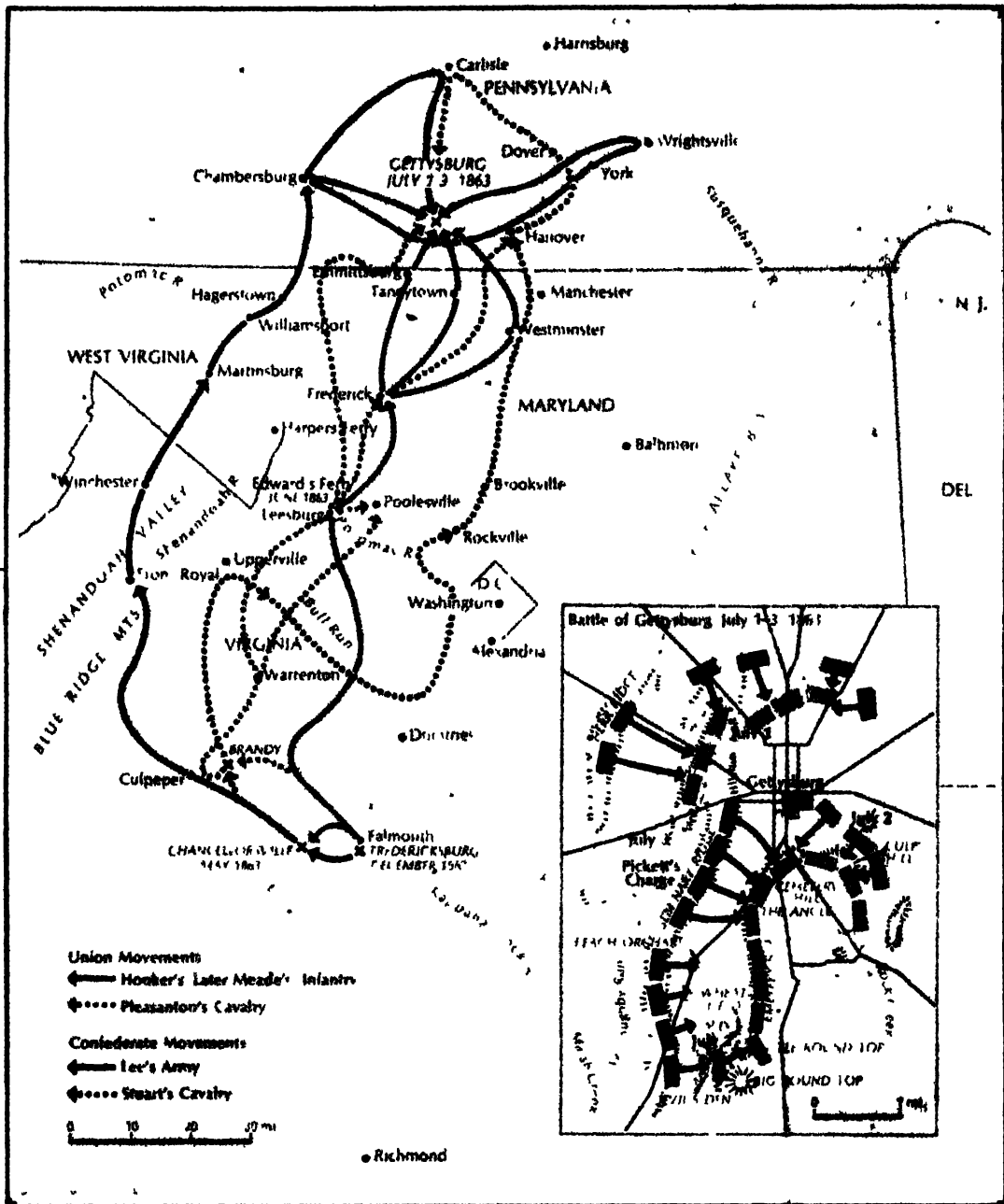
In May he unveiled his plan. The navy ran transports past the river batteries to a point below Vicksburg. The army marched down the west side, where it was met by the navy and transported to the east side. Now Grant was south of Vicksburg on relatively high and dry ground. Moving rapidly, he defeated enemy forces barring his way at Champion's Hill and the Big Black River, and closed in on Vicksburg itself. After failing to storm the strong works, he settled down to a siege, which endured for six weeks. Pemberton, realizing that his government could not break Grant's hold and that his garrison of 30,000 was exhausted by constant fighting, surrendered on July 4. Immediately thereafter the other Confederate strong point on the river, Port Hudson (Louisiana), surrendered to a Federal force that had come up from New Orleans under N. P. Banks.

At last the Federals had achieved one of their principal strategic aims; they had gained control of the Mississippi line. The Confederacy

was split into two parts, and the trans-Mississippi area was isolated from the main section. A great turning point in the war had been reached.

When the siege of Vicksburg began, the Confederate high command in Richmond was dismayed at the prospect of losing the great river fortress. Various plans to relieve the city were discussed, the principal one being a proposal to send part of Lee's army to Tennessee, possibly with Lee himself in command, to launch an offensive. But Lee demurred; he did not want to leave Virginia. He put forward a counterscheme: he would invade Pennsylvania. If he could win a victory on Northern soil, he said, great results would follow. The North might abandon the war, England and France might intervene, and the pressure on Vicksburg and other fronts would be broken. The government assented, and in June Lee started his movement, swinging his army west toward the Valley and then north through Maryland into Pennsylvania.

As Lee advanced, Hooker moved back to confront him, marching parallel to the line of Lee's route. But Hooker evidently had been



**Gettysburg Campaign 1863**

unnerved by his experience at Chancellorsville. He seemed to be looking for a chance to escape his responsibility, and he soon found an excuse to ask to be relieved. To replace him Lincoln appointed an army corps commander

George G. Meade, a solid if unimaginative soldier. Meade followed Lee, and approached what might be called the strategic rear of the Confederate army in southern Pennsylvania. Lee, who had not expected the Federals to

move so rapidly, was astounded when he learned of their nearness. With his army marching in three columns, he was in a dangerous position; hurriedly he had to concentrate his forces. Meade, realizing that Lee in enemy country had to attack or retreat, selected a strong defensive site at the little town of Gettysburg, a road hub in the region, and Lee, seeking contact with the Federals, moved toward the same spot. Here on July 1–3 was fought the most celebrated battle of the war.

The Union army occupied a formidable position on the heights south of the town. Their line resembled an inverted fishhook, the right resting on Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill and the front stretching along Cemetery Ridge for three miles. On the first day (July 1) the two armies jockeyed for position around Gettysburg; the tough fighting started the following day. Lee, confident of the prowess of his troops and combative by nature, decided to attack even though he was outnumbered 90,000 to 75,300. On July 2 he threw an assault at the Union left on Cemetery Ridge which crumpled up an advanced Federal corps but failed to reach the main line. On July 3 he mounted a greater effort: 15,000 men were to hit the center of the ridge and crack the Federal line wide open. The attacking force advanced over almost a mile of open space swept by enemy fire (the famous Pickett's charge). Only about 5,000 men reached the ridge, and these had to surrender or retreat. After a day of sullen waiting by both armies, Lee withdrew his shattered forces to Virginia. Meade, who had little aggressive instinct, made but a feeble pursuit. Although Meade had thrown away an opportunity to end the war, Gettysburg was another turning point. The total Confederate losses in the campaign were close to 25,000. Never again would Lee feel strong enough to fight offensively.

A third turning point against the Confederacy was reached in Tennessee. In the autumn Rosecrans moved toward Chattanooga. Bragg, in order to secure room to maneuver, evacuated the town, which was occupied by the Federals on September 9. Rosecrans, forgetting that he had not defeated Bragg, rashly plunged over the Georgia line in pursuit, where Bragg, reinforced by troops from Lee's army, was lying in wait to attack. Rosecrans barely got his scattered forces in hand before Bragg deliv-

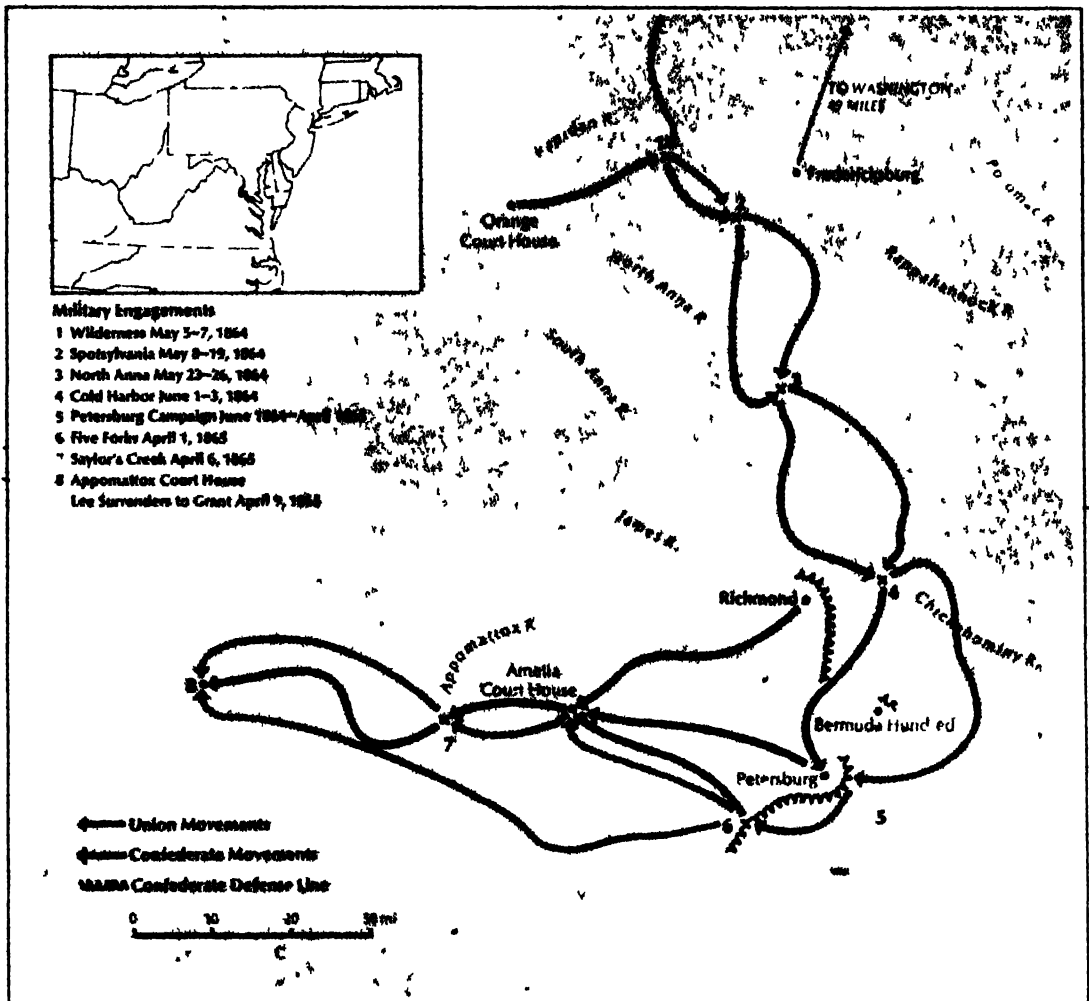
ered his assault at Chickamauga (September 19–20). This was one of the few battles in which the Confederates enjoyed a numerical superiority (70,000 to 56,000). On the second day Bragg smashed the Union right wide open. Rosecrans and his corps generals on that flank fled to Chattanooga even though his left continued to fight under the command of George H. Thomas, who here won the nickname of "the Rock of Chickamauga." Shortly Thomas too had to retire, and the beaten army fell back into the Chattanooga defenses.

Bragg did not move rapidly to exploit his victory, partly because of his heavy casualties (17,000), but eventually he advanced and occupied the heights south of Chattanooga. Mounting batteries on these points, he commanded the roads leading into the city and virtually shut off its supplies. The Union high command, however, had ample resources to break the siege. Grant was named departmental commander of the West. Immediately he replaced Rosecrans with Thomas, and came with part of his own army to Chattanooga. The reinforced Federal army numbered 60,000, while Bragg's army was weakened by the detachment of a force for a fruitless operation against Knoxville. At the Battle of Chattanooga (November 23–25) the Federals hurled Bragg from his lines on Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain and back into northern Georgia. They then proceeded to occupy most of east Tennessee.

A second objective of Northern strategy had been achieved: possession of the Tennessee River line. From the Chattanooga base the Federals were in position to split the Confederacy again—what was left of it. Chattanooga deserves to be ranked with Vicksburg and Gettysburg. After 1863 the Confederacy had no chance on any front to win its independence by a military decision. Now it could hope to triumph only by exhausting the Northern will to fight.

## THE ENDING 1864–1865

Grant's plans for 1864 called for two great offensives. The Army of the Potomac, commanded by Meade but accompanied and directed by Grant, was to seek to bring Lee to decisive battle in northern Virginia. From near Chattanoo-



**Virginia Campaigns 1864-1865**

ga the Western army, commanded by William T. Sherman, was to advance into northern Georgia, destroy the Confederate army, now commanded by Joseph E. Johnston, and wreck the economic resources of Atlanta.

The two offensives started in May. From its position in northern Virginia the Army of the Potomac, 115,000 strong, crossed the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers and plunged into the Wilderness area. Grant's plan was to envelop Lee's right and force him to a showdown battle. Lee, whose army numbered about 75,000 at the beginning of the campaign, was determined to avoid a showdown unless he saw a chance to deal a decisive blow. In the Battle of

the Wilderness (May 5-7) each commander struck savagely at the other. Demonstrating superb defensive skill, Lee prevented Grant from turning his right. But the Federal commander, instead of retreating to reorganize as his predecessors had done after a reverse, slid off to his left and to the southeast. He turned up at Spotsylvania Court House, where Lee moved to meet him. Here another bloody, indecisive engagement was fought (May 8-19). Again Grant sidled to his left, and again Lee slid with him. In this manner, without fighting another major clash, the two armies moved until they reached Cold Harbor, a few miles north of Richmond. At this point Grant made a last at-



tempt to destroy Lee north of Richmond (June 1-3) and was bloodily repulsed. In a month of fighting Grant had lost in total casualties 55,000 men, and Lee, 31,000.

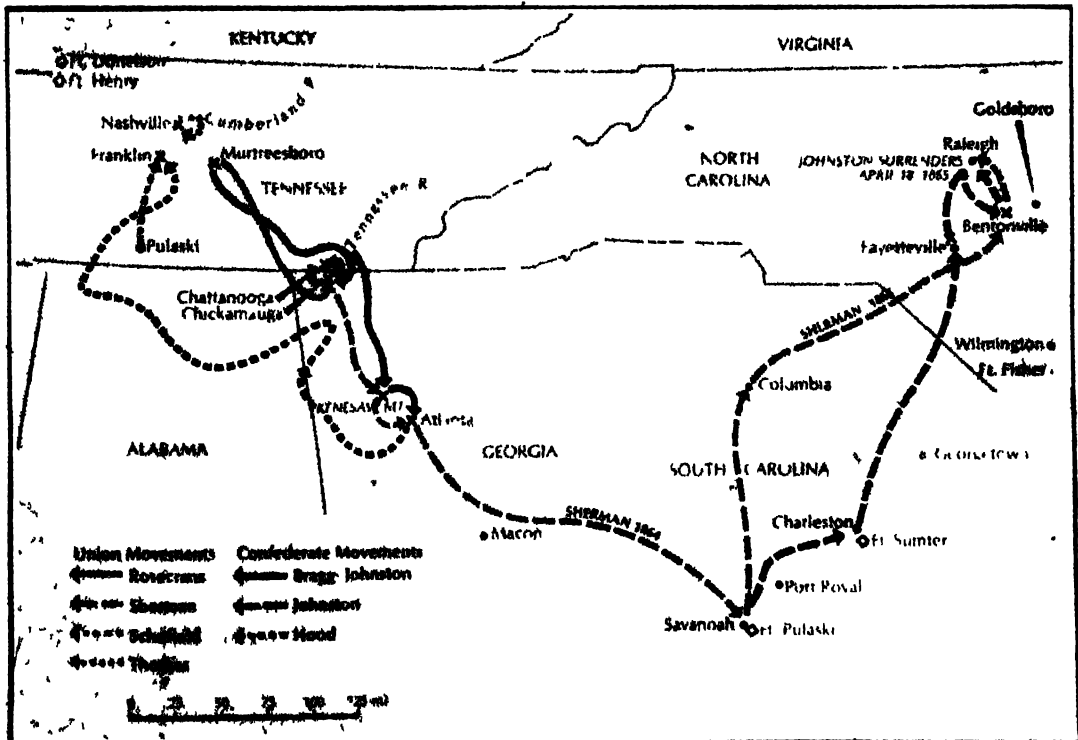
Now Grant had to alter his strategy. If he remained where he was, Lee would retire into the Richmond defenses to stand a siege, something Grant wanted to avoid. Masking his movements from his adversary, Grant moved southward across the James heading for Petersburg, directly south of Richmond. Petersburg was the hub of all the railroads feeding into the capital; if Grant could secure it he could force Lee to come into the open to fight for his communications. He almost succeeded. Petersburg was defended only by a small force under Beauregard, who managed, however, to hold Grant off until Lee's army could arrive. Grant now realized that he would have to resort to siege operations. He dug in, and so did Lee. The trench lines of the two armies stretched for miles above and below Petersburg. Always Grant strove to extend his left

around Lee's right so as to get on the railroads that were the life line of the Southern army. It would be nine months until he reached his objective.

In May, Sherman, with an army of over 90,000, moved against Johnston's army at Atlanta, which numbered 60,000 at the beginning. Johnston's plan was to delay Sherman, to fight for time, and not to commit his forces unless the conditions were exceptionally favorable. The Atlanta campaign developed primarily into a game of maneuver in which Sherman tried to trap his rival, who avoided being caught. The two armies skirmished and fought almost constantly, but the only set battle was at Kennesaw Mountain (June 27). As Sherman was approaching Atlanta, President Davis replaced Johnston with John B. Hood. Combative by nature, Hood threw two successive attacks at Sherman, both of which failed. The Union army occupied Atlanta on September 2.

Sherman had not destroyed the enemy army. Eager to strike deeper into Georgia, he

### Sherman's March Through the Confederacy 1864-1865





### The Impact of War on the South

*Because most of the fighting in the Civil War occurred in the South, that section suffered widespread destruction of its physical resources. At the top is Fredericksburg, Virginia, the site of a battle in 1862, and below is Columbia, South Carolina, much of which was burned when occupied by Sherman's army in 1864. (Library of Congress)*

sent 30,000 of his army to Tennessee under Thomas, and prepared to move for Savannah on the coast. At the same time Hood decided to invade Tennessee, hoping to force Sherman to follow him.

Confronting Hood, and seeking to delay him, was a Union force of about 30,000 under John M. Schofield. Hood caught up with Schofield at Franklin, Tennessee, on November 30. With no artillery support, Hood resolved to attack across two miles of open space, though the Federals were entrenched in a strong position. In six fruitless charges he lost 6,000 men; eleven of his generals were killed or wounded. After that he might as well have gone back to Georgia. But he moved forward and took up a position south of Nashville. In the city Thomas was gathering an army that would eventually number over 60,000. When he was ready, he came out looking for Hood. At the Battle of Nashville (December 15–16) he smashed Hood from the field. As the Confederates retreated toward Mississippi, they were harried by the most merciless cavalry pursuit of the war. Only a few units reached Mississippi intact. The Confederate Army of Tennessee had, in effect, ceased to exist.

In the meantime Sherman was marching almost unopposed across Georgia, inaugurating a new kind of warfare. He was the prophet of modern total war—war against the civilian population of the enemy, war intended to break the enemy people's will to resist. His army marched on a sixty-mile front, destroying property and supplies that might be used by the Confederate forces and committing many individual depredations as well. But the greatest result of Sherman's march was psychological rather than economic. What Southerner who heard of a Union army moving at will through the heart of the South could ever believe again that the Confederacy could win the war? In Virginia soldiers in Lee's army deserted to go home to take care of their families. By December 20 Sherman was at Savannah.

Sherman then turned into South Carolina, still facing slight opposition and still ripping up

enemy property. He was accomplishing two objectives: destroying both Confederate resources and the railroads that brought supplies from the lower South to Lee's army. When he advanced into North Carolina, the Confederate government got together an army of 30,000 under Johnston to oppose him, but this small force could do little more than delay his march. Nor could Lee move against him, for he was pinned down at Petersburg by Grant.

In April 1865, Grant finally passed a part of his army around Lee's right to the vital railroads. The Confederates evacuated Petersburg and Richmond, and Lee moved westward with his army, now shrunk to about 25,000. His one forlorn hope was to reach a rail line to North Carolina and unite with Johnston. But the pursuing Federal army barred his escape route. At last he realized that further fighting was hopeless, and on April 9 he met Grant at Appomattox and surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia. In North Carolina Joe Johnston reached the same conclusion, and on April 18 he surrendered to Sherman near Durham. Jefferson Davis, defiant to the last and unable to recognize defeat, fled southward, and was captured in Georgia. The war was soon over.

### THE WAR'S AFTERMATH

In the North, the wartime prosperity continued into the postwar years, but Northerners who visited the South were appalled when they gazed upon the desolation left in the wake of the war—gutted towns, wrecked plantations, neglected fields, collapsed bridges, and ruined railroads. Much of the personal property of Southerners had been lost with the lost cause. Confederate bonds and currency were now worthless, and capital that had been invested in them was gone forever. And with the emancipation of the slaves, Southern whites would be deprived of property worth an estimated \$2 billion.

Matching the shattered economy of the South was the disorganization of its social sys-

tem. In the months that followed the end of the war, when thousands of soldiers were drifting back to their homes—258,000 never returned and other thousands went back wounded or sick—life was seriously deranged. To many people the problem of keeping alive, of securing food and shelter, seemed the only thing that mattered.

If conditions were bad for Southern whites, they were generally worse for Southern blacks—the 4 million who were emerging from the bondage that had held them and their ancestors for two and a half centuries. Many of these people, too, had seen service of one kind or another during the war. Some had served as body servants for Confederate officers or as teamsters and laborers for the Confederate armies. Tens of thousands had fought as combat troops in the Union ranks, and more than 38,000 had given their lives for the Union cause. Among the black soldiers the death rate was much higher than among the whites, partly because of the haste and poor preparation with which Negroes were sometimes sent into action, partly because of the usual Confederate practice of granting them no quarter in battle. Countless other Negroes, who never wore a uniform or drew army pay, assisted the Union forces as spies or scouts. Still others ran off from the plantations, thus depriving the South of labor, and flocked into the Union lines, often to be put to work for the Union armies. Certainly the blacks contributed a great deal of effort and sacrifice to the winning of their own freedom.

As the war ended, freedom appeared to be on the way, but its arrival was uncertain. The Thirteenth Amendment, which would make slavery unconstitutional, had yet to be ratified by the requisite number of states (it had passed Congress on February 1, 1865, and was to be proclaimed in effect on December 18, 1865). On many plantations the blacks were still being detained and forced to work. Most planters agreed with a former Confederate leader who was saying (in June 1865) that slavery had been "the best system of labor that could be devised for the Negro race" and that the wise thing to do now would be to "provide a substitute for it."

To get away from their old masters, thousands of Negroes continued to leave the plantations. Old and young, many of them feeble and

ill, they trudged to the nearest town or city or they roamed the countryside, camping at night on the bare ground. Few had any possessions except the rags on their backs. Somehow they managed to stay alive.

What the Negroes wanted was, first of all, to be assured of their freedom—to feel it, to exercise it, and to know it was not going to be taken from them. Next, they needed immediate relief from the threat of starvation. Then, looking ahead, they desired land, farms of their own, a bit of economic independence. A few of the freed slaves had already settled on abandoned plantations, notably on the Sea Islands along the South Carolina coast and on land in Mississippi that had belonged to the Davis family. The Negroes also longed for schooling for their children if not for themselves. In some places, above all in New Orleans, there were well-educated and highly cultured communities of blacks who had been free for generations. But education was a rare and precious thing to the new freedmen, most of whom were as illiterate as the slave codes had intended them to be. Finally, a number of the Negroes were beginning to demand political rights. "The only salvation for us besides the power of the Government is in the *possession of the ballot*," a convention of the colored people of Virginia resolved in the summer of 1865. "All we ask is an *equal chance*."

The federal government, besides keeping troops (many of them black) in the South to preserve order and protect the Negroes, was doing something to assist them in the transition from slavery to freedom. Congress had set up (in March 1865) the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands as an agency of the army. This Freedmen's Bureau was empowered to provide food, transportation, assistance in getting jobs and fair wages, and schools for former slaves, and also to settle them on abandoned or confiscated lands. Under the able direction of General Oliver O. Howard, the bureau undertook to perform its allotted functions, and more. Its agents soon distributed 20 million rations in the South, to hungry whites as well as blacks. Cooperating with the bureau, especially in its educational work, were missionaries and teachers who had been sent to the South by Freedmen's Aid Societies and other private and church groups in the North.

Nevertheless, the future of the blacks remained in doubt. The Freedmen's Bureau, according to the law creating it, was to last for only one year after the end of the war. Meanwhile, the majority of Southern whites resent-

ed the activities of the bureau and its agents. These outsiders stood in the way of the desire to set up a substitute for slavery, a substitute that would serve both as a cheap labor system and as a white supremacy device.

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# Reconstructing the Nation





## Sixteen

When Americans of a later generation looked back on the 1860s and 1870s, it seemed to many of them that there had been a sharp break between the Civil War and the ensuing period of Reconstruction. The war itself, for all its suffering and sacrifice, was remembered on the whole as an ennobling experience, one of high purpose and gallantry on both sides. The postwar years, by contrast, appeared to have been a time of low, unscrupulous politics, a time when vengeful men among the victors disgraced the country while unnecessarily delaying a real, heartfelt reunion of the North and the South.

That view contains elements of historical reality, but it misses an essential truth about the troubled postwar period. The struggle over Reconstruction was, in part, a continuation of the Civil War. It was a struggle, as the war had been, that involved (among other things) the question of both state rights and human rights. The victory for Union and emancipation had not been completely won at Appomattox. In the postwar years an effort was made to confirm the supremacy of the national government over the Southern states and to assure the benefits of freedom to the millions of emancipated slaves. This effort, provoking resistance as it did, had the effect of keeping the country psychologically divided.

Politicians on both sides added to the divisive effect by playing upon the hatreds left over from the war. Republicans implied that all Democrats, Northern as well as Southern, had been traitors. "Every man that shot Union soldiers was a Democrat," a typical Republican orator declaimed. "The man that assassinated Abraham Lincoln was a Democrat." This technique of reviving wartime emotions in order to win postwar elections came to be known, among Democrats, as "waving the bloody shirt." But in the South the Democrats waved a bloody shirt of their own. They denounced their opponents, black and

### **"Worse than Slavery"**

*During Reconstruction the blacks of the South suffered at the hands of white supremacists, as depicted in this 1874 wood engraving by Thomas Nast. The greatest American political cartoonist of the nineteenth century, Bavarian-born Nast made the elephant and donkey the symbols respectively of the Republican and Democratic parties. (Library of Congress)*

white, as desecrators of the Confederate cause. The Ku Klux Klan, an anti-Republican terrorist group, pretended that its members were ghosts of the Confederate army.

The struggle over Reconstruction ended in the Compromise of 1877. This arrangement, a combination of "reunion and reaction," brought the sections together at the expense of the Negro. The federal government gave up the attempt to enforce the Negro's rights and left the Southern states

in the hands of the Democrats. Yet two great charters of human liberty still stood as documents of the Reconstruction era—the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments to the federal Constitution—which had been intended to assure citizenship and the suffrage to the former slaves. For the time being, these documents were disregarded, but a day was to come, several decades later, when they would provide the legal basis for a renewed drive to bring true freedom and equality to all Americans.

## **The Problem of Peacemaking**

The Constitution provides for peacemaking at the end of a foreign war. The President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, ratifies a treaty of peace. But the Constitution naturally makes no provision for ending a civil war. And Lincoln could not negotiate a treaty with Confederate leaders, for that would mean recognizing the legal existence of the Confederacy. Yet, once the armies had stopped fighting, a peace arrangement somehow had to be made.

### **RECONSTRUCTION: THE ISSUES**

The word "Reconstruction," as contemporaries used it, referred to the process by which peace was to be made, that is, the process by which the states of the defeated Confederacy were to be brought back to their former places in the Union. One possibility would be to grant easy terms, permitting the states to return promptly and with little internal change except for the elimination of slavery. Another possibility would be to make a harsh peace, delaying the readmission of the states until they had been reconstructed in such a way as to reduce the power of the rebel leaders.

A quick and easy restoration of the Union would be to the advantage of the former Confederates and the Democratic party North and South. Ironically, the abolition of slavery would increase the power of the Southern states in national politics. In the past, under the "three-fifths clause" of the Constitution, only three-fifths of the slaves had been counted in determining a state's representation in Congress and its electoral votes in presidential elections. In

the future, *all* the former slaves would be counted, whether or not they themselves were given political rights. A state such as South Carolina, where about half of the population was black, would have its congressional representation increased, for example, by approximately 20 percent. With this added strength the Southern Democrats could rejoin the Northern Democrats and get control of both Congress and the presidency.

The consequences of an easy peace, by the same token, could be disastrous for the Republican party. The Republicans had gained control of the federal government in 1860–1861 only because of the split in the Democratic party and the secession of the Southern states. Once these had been restored and the Democratic party had been reunited, the Republicans would face the uncomfortable prospect of being reduced to a minority group once again. The outlook was disturbing also for Northern businessmen who during the war had obtained favors from the federal government—a high tariff, railroad subsidies, the national banking system—which might be ended once the Democrats were back in power.

For the Negroes emerging from slavery, a quick restoration of the Southern states would be catastrophic. The master class, which had dominated the state governments before and during the war, would continue to do so. The Negroes then could expect to be kept in a position that, at best, would be somewhere between slavery and freedom.

Thus the issues of Reconstruction were very similar to those of the war itself. So far as the Southern leaders were concerned, the war



had been fought for the independence of the South and for the preservation of slavery (in 1861 the Confederate Vice President, Alexander H. Stephens, had frankly proclaimed that slavery was the "cornerstone" of the Confederacy). After the war these leaders hoped to maintain a considerable degree of Southern autonomy through the assertion of state rights, and they hoped to retain much of the essence of slavery by finding some substitute for it. If they should have their way in Reconstruction, the "lost cause" they had fought for would not be completely lost.

The issues were often obscured and complicated by the emotionalism of the controversy over Reconstruction. On both sides people approached the question in a spirit of hatred left over from the four years of bloodshed. In the North there was the memory of sacrifice, suffering, and personal loss, in the South there was even more of that, plus the added bitterness of defeat. In the North there was a widespread feeling that Southerners ought to be required to acknowledge their defeat by some gesture of submission, and that at least a few of them ought to be punished for their guilt in bringing on the war and also for the atrocities which, according to Northern wartime propaganda, they had committed in the course of it. Moreover, there was a general conviction that the former slaves ought to be protected in their freedom and assured of justice. And there was a growing belief that Reconstruction offered a heaven-sent opportunity to recast the South in the image of the North—to take that supposedly backward, feudal, undemocratic section and civilize and modernize it.

The Reconstruction question was further complicated by disputes over the respective roles that the President and Congress were to play. Presumably, the task should have been one for the executive and the legislative branches, the two acting in cooperation. As it happened, however, the President and the congressional majority differed on the policy to be followed. Hence arose the issue of presidential as opposed to congressional powers.

Even among the majority in Congress—the Republicans—there was disagreement as to the kind of peace that should be imposed upon the South. The same factions of the party (the Conservatives and the Radicals) that had clashed on wartime emancipation now con-

fronted each other on the issue of Reconstruction. The Conservatives advocated a mild peace and the rapid restoration of the defeated states to the Union; beyond insisting that the South accept the abolition of slavery, they would not interfere with race relations or attempt to alter the social system of the South. The Radicals, directed by leaders like Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, stood for a hard peace; they urged that the civil and military chieftains of the late Confederacy be subjected to severe punishment, that large numbers of Southern whites be disfranchised, and that the property of rich Southerners who had aided the Confederacy be confiscated and distributed among the freedmen. From the first, some Radicals favored granting suffrage to the former slaves, as a matter of right or as a means of creating a Republican electorate in the South. Other Radicals agreed with them, but hesitated to state a position for fear of public opinion—not all Northern states permitted Negroes to vote.

Between the Radicals and the Conservatives stood a faction of uncommitted Republicans who may be termed the Moderates. They would go further than the Conservatives in demanding concessions of the South, particularly in regard to rights for Negroes, but they rejected the punitive goals of the Radicals. As the Reconstruction controversy developed, the pressure of events would inexorably force the Moderates into the Radical camp.

The various proponents of a Reconstruction policy, following an honored American tradition, attempted to buttress their position with constitutional sanction. The Conservatives, claiming that secession was illegal, contended that the seceded states had never legally been out of the Union, were still in it, and had all the rights of states. The Radicals, the uncompromising nationalists of the war, now insisted that the Southern states had in fact withdrawn from the nation and had therefore forfeited their rights as states. Sumner argued that by seceding they had committed "state suicide," and Stevens bluntly referred to them as "conquered provinces." On the other hand, Southerners who had fought to uphold the right of secession now demanded all the privileges they had previously enjoyed in the Union they had tried to dissolve.

**LINCOLN'S PLAN**

The process of Reconstruction was put into motion while the war was still going on, and the first plan was presented by President Lincoln. He believed there were a considerable number of actual or potential Unionists in the South. These people, most of them former Whigs, could possibly be encouraged to rejoin the old Whigs of the North and thus strengthen the Republican party, once the Union had been restored. More immediately, these men could serve as the nucleus for setting up new and loyal states in the South and thereby hastening reunion. All along, Lincoln was concerned with principle as well as politics: the principle of the inviolability of the Union. He wanted to restore the American experiment in democracy as soon as possible. Consequently, he proposed an easy mode of Reconstruction. He would subordinate to his larger goal such questions as punishment of the defeated side or determination of the status of the freedmen. The question of whether the defeated states were in or out of the Union he dismissed as a "merely pernicious abstraction." They were only out of their proper, practical relationship to the Union, he said, and they should be restored to that relationship as soon as possible.

Specifically, Lincoln's plan, which he announced to the public in a proclamation of December 1863, offered a general amnesty to all who would take an oath pledging future loyalty to the government. Temporarily excluded from the right to swear the oath were high civil and military officials of the Confederacy. Whenever in any state 10 percent of the number of voters in 1860 took the oath, they could proceed to set up a state government. The oath required acceptance of the wartime acts and proclamations of Congress and the President concerning slavery. This was the only provision in the plan that imposed on the South a condition for readmission and the only part of the plan that dealt with national supervision of race relations. Instead of demanding outright abolition (the Thirteenth Amendment had not yet been passed, and the postwar effect of the Emancipation Proclamation was uncertain, since it was a war measure), Lincoln told Southern leaders that he hoped they would provide for permanent freedom. He also urged them to give the ballot to at least a few Negroes—to those who were educated, owned

property, and had served in the Union army. In three Southern states—Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee—loyal governments were reestablished under the Lincoln formula in 1864.

The Radical Republicans were angered and astonished at the mildness of Lincoln's program, and they were able to induce Congress to repudiate his governments. Representatives from the Lincoln states were not admitted to Congress, and the electoral vote of those states was not counted in the election of 1864. In defeating Lincoln's plan, the Radicals were aided by a number of Moderate Republicans who thought that the President's scheme did not provide adequate protection for the freedmen. The Radicals could not stop, however, with a rejection of Lincoln's plan. The requirements of politics dictated that they produce a plan of their own. But at the moment the Radicals had not thought the Reconstruction problem through. They were not agreed as to how "hard" a peace they should enforce on the South, and they were not certain that Northern opinion would support the ideas of their more extreme leaders.

Under pressure, they prepared and passed (in July 1864) the Wade-Davis Bill, which may be considered the first Radical plan of Reconstruction. By its provisions, the President was to appoint for each conquered state a provisional governor who would take a census of all adult white males. If a majority of those enrolled—instead of Lincoln's 10 percent—swore an oath of allegiance, the governor was to call an election for a state constitutional convention. The privilege of voting for delegates to this meeting was limited to those who could swear that they had never borne arms against the United States, the so-called iron-clad oath. The convention was required to put provisions into the new constitution abolishing slavery, disfranchising Confederate civil and military leaders, and repudiating the Confederate and state war debts. After these conditions had been met, Congress would readmit the state to the Union. The Wade-Davis Bill was more drastic in almost every respect than the Lincoln plan, and it assumed that the seceded states were out of the Union and hence under the dictation of Congress. But the bill, like the President's proposal, left up to the states the question of political rights for Negroes.

The Wade-Davis Bill was passed a few days before Congress adjourned, which ena-

bled Lincoln to dispose of it with a pocket veto. His action enraged the authors of the measure, Benjamin F. Wade and Henry Winter Davis, who issued a blistering denunciation of the veto, the Wade-Davis Manifesto, warning the President not to interfere with the powers of Congress to control Reconstruction. Lincoln could not ignore the bitterness and the strength of the Radical opposition. Practical as always, he realized that he would have to accept some of the objections of the Radicals. He began to move toward a new approach to Reconstruction, possibly one that included greater national supervision of the freedmen.

What plan he would have come up with nobody can say. On April 14, 1865, a crazed actor, John Wilkes Booth, under the delusion that he was helping the South, shot the President in a Washington theater. Lincoln died early the following morning, and because of the circumstances of his death—the heroic leader, the Great Emancipator struck down in the hour of victory by an assassin—he achieved immediate martyrdom. In the wild excitement of the hour, it was widely assumed that Booth had been instigated to his mad act by men in the South, and the Radicals played on this theme with reckless charges implicating high Confederates. Ironically, Lincoln's death helped to kill his policy of a generous peace.

## JOHNSON AND "RESTORATION"

The conservative leadership in the controversy over Reconstruction fell upon Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson. Of all the men who accidentally inherited the presidency, Johnson was undoubtedly the most unfortunate. A Southerner and former slaveholder, he became President as a bloody war against the South was drawing to a close. A Democrat before he had been placed on the Union ticket with Lincoln in 1864, he became the head of a Republican administration at a time when partisan passions, held in some restraint during the war, were about to rule the government. As if these handicaps of background were not enough, Johnson was intemperate in language and tactless in manner, and he lacked Lincoln's skill in handling people. Unlike Lincoln, he was theoretical rather than practical, dogmatic rather than pragmatic. In dealing with Reconstruction, he stood righteously by the Constitution,

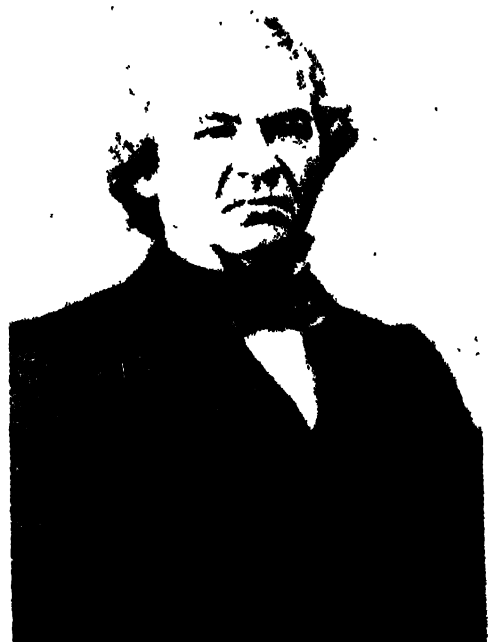
even though that document obviously did not envision the unprecedented constitutional situation that existed after the war.

Johnson revealed his plan of Reconstruction—or "Restoration," as he preferred to call it—soon after he took office, and he proceeded to execute it during the summer of 1865 when Congress was not in session. He applied it to the eight states of the late Confederacy that had not come under the Lincoln plan; he recognized as legal organizations the Lincoln governments in Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Virginia.

In some ways Johnson's scheme resembled Lincoln's; in others it was similar to the Wade-Davis Bill. Like his predecessor, Johnson assumed that the seceded states were still in the Union, and, also like Lincoln, he an-

### Andrew Johnson

*Born in North Carolina, Johnson moved to Tennessee as a young man and worked as a tailor before going into politics. He had a dark complexion and piercing black eyes. A powerful orator on the stump, he easily lost his temper when heckled and used crude and intemperate language. Sincerely devoted to his principles, he was sometimes too theoretical in upholding them. (Library of Congress)*



nounced his design in a proclamation of amnesty that extended pardon for past conduct to all who would take an oath of allegiance. Denied the privilege of taking the oath until they received individual pardons from the President were high-ranking Confederate officials and also men with land worth \$20,000 or more; Johnson excluded a larger number of leaders than Lincoln had. For each state the President appointed a provisional governor who was to invite the qualified voters to elect delegates to a constitutional convention. Johnson did not specify that a minimum number of voters had to take the oath, as had the Lincoln and Wade-Davis proposals, but the implication was plain that he would require a majority. As conditions of readmittance, the state had to revoke the ordinance of secession, abolish slavery and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, and repudiate the Confederate and state war debts—essentially the same stipulations that had been laid down in the Wade-Davis Bill. The final procedure before restoration was for a state to elect a state government and send representatives to Congress.

By the end of 1865 the states affected by Johnson's plan had complied with its requirements. Indeed, if the Lincoln governments are included, all of the seceded states had been reconstructed and were ready to resume their places in the Union—if Congress chose to recognize them when it met in December 1865. Recognition of the Johnson governments was exactly what the Radicals were determined to prevent. And many people in the North agreed with them that Reconstruction was being rushed too fast and was being accomplished too easily.

Northerners were disturbed by the seeming reluctance of some members of the Southern conventions to abolish slavery and by the refusal of all the conventions to grant suffrage to even a few Negroes. They were astounded that states claiming to be "loyal" should elect as state officials and representatives to Congress prominent leaders of the recent Confederacy. Particularly hard to understand was Georgia's choice of Alexander H. Stephens, former Vice President of the Confederacy, as a United States senator.

## **Radical Reconstruction**

When Congress met in December 1865, it denied admission to the senators and representatives from the states that President Andrew Johnson had "restored." The Radical leaders explained that the Southerners should be excluded until Congress knew more about conditions in the South. Congress must first be assured that the former Confederates had accepted the results of the war and that Southern Negroes and loyal whites were safe. Accordingly, Congress set up the Joint Committee on Reconstruction to investigate opinions in the South and to advise Congress in laying down a Reconstruction policy.

### **CONGRESS TAKES OVER**

During the next few months the Radicals, though disagreeing among themselves, advanced toward a more severe program than their first plan, the Wade-Davis Bill of 1864, which left to the states the question of what rights the freed slaves should have. The Radi-

cals gained the support of moderate Republicans because of Johnson's intransigent attitude. Johnson insisted that Congress had no right even to consider a policy for the South until his own plan had been accepted and the Southern congressmen and senators had been admitted.

Northern opinion was aroused by the so-called Black Codes, which the Southern legislatures adopted during the sessions of 1865–1866. These measures were the South's solution for the problem of the free Negro laborer, and they were also the South's substitute for slavery as a white supremacy device. Economically, the codes were intended to regulate the labor of a race that, in the opinion of the whites, would not work except under some kind of compulsion. Although the economic provisions varied in stringency from state to state, they all authorized local officials to apprehend unemployed Negroes, fine them for vagrancy, and hire them out to private employers to satisfy the fine. Some of the codes tried to force Negroes to work on the plantations by forbidding

## The Black Code of Louisiana

The sections in the Black Codes regulating Negro labor angered Northern opinion and turned many people in favor of Radical Reconstruction. The Louisiana Code had this to say.

*Sec. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana in general assembly convened, That all persons employed as laborers in agricultural pursuits shall be required, during the first ten days of the month of January of each year, to make contracts for labor for the then ensuing year, or for the year next ensuing the termination of their present contracts. All contracts for labor for agricultural purposes shall be made in writing, signed by the employer, and shall be made in the presence of a Justice of the Peace and two disinterested witnesses, in whose presence the contract shall be read to the laborer, and when assented to and signed by the latter, shall be considered as binding for the time prescribed . . .*

*Sec. 2. Every laborer shall have full and perfect liberty to choose his employer, but, when once chosen, he shall not be allowed to leave his place of employment until the fulfillment of his contract . . . and if they do so leave, without cause or permission, they shall forfeit all wages earned to the time of abandonment. . . .*

them to own or lease farms or to take other jobs except as domestic servants. Socially, the codes were designed to govern relations between the races and to invest the Negroes with a legal although subordinate status. The acts conferred certain civil rights upon blacks, but they also placed special restrictions on Negroes that did not apply to whites. To the South, the Black Codes were a realistic approach to a great social problem. To the North, they seemed to herald a return to slavery.

An appropriate agency for offsetting the Black Codes was the Freedmen's Bureau, but its scheduled year of existence was about to end. It had been losing some of its original functions. With the passing of the immediate post-war emergency, there was decreasing need for the bureau's relief activities. And President Johnson had been pardoning so many former rebels—thus restoring to them their confiscated plantations—that there was less and less land available for resettling former slaves.

In February 1866 Congress passed a bill to prolong the life of the bureau and to widen its powers by authorizing special courts for settling labor disputes. Thus the bureau could set aside work agreements that might be forced upon Negroes under the Black Codes. Johnson vetoed the bill, denouncing it as unconstitutional.

In April Congress again struck at the Black Codes by passing the Civil Rights Bill, which made United States citizens of Negroes and

empowered the federal government to intervene in state affairs when necessary for protecting the rights of citizens. Johnson vetoed this bill, too. With Moderates and Radicals acting together, Congress had the necessary two-thirds majority, and it promptly overrode the veto. Then, despite another veto, Congress repassed the Freedmen's Bureau Bill.

Emboldened by their evident support in Congress, the Radicals now struck again, and harder. The Joint Committee on Reconstruction submitted to Congress in April 1866 a proposed amendment to the Constitution, the Fourteenth, which constituted the second Radical plan of Reconstruction.

The Fourteenth Amendment, which was adopted by Congress and sent to the states for approval in the early summer, is so important, both in its immediate bearing upon Reconstruction and in its future influence upon federal-state relationships, as to deserve particular analysis.

Section 1 declared that all persons born or naturalized in the United States were citizens of the United States and of the state of their residence. This clause, which set up for the first time a national definition of citizenship, was followed by a statement that no state could abridge the rights of citizens of the United States or deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law or deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2 provided that if a state denied the suffrage to any of its adult male inhabitants, its representation in the House of Representatives and the electoral college should suffer a proportionate reduction. This clause was intended to be a corrective to the curious effect of emancipation upon the basis of representation, by which every Southern state stood to increase its influence in the national government.

Section 3 disqualified from any state or federal office persons who had previously taken an oath to support the Constitution and later had aided the Confederacy—until Congress by a two-thirds vote of each house should remove their disability.

The Southern legislatures knew that if they ratified the amendment their states would be readmitted and Reconstruction probably would be ended. But they could not bring themselves to approve the measure, mainly because of Section 3, which put a stigma on their late leaders. Johnson himself advised Southerners to defeat the amendment. Only Tennessee, of the former Confederate states, ratified it, thus winning readmittance. The other ten, joined by Kentucky and Delaware, voted it down.

The amendment thus failed to receive the required approval of three-fourths of the states and was defeated—but only temporarily. When the time was more propitious, the Radicals would bring it up again. Meanwhile, its rejection by the South strengthened the Radical cause. To many people in the North, the amendment had seemed to be a reasonable and moderate proposal.

Public acceptance of the Radical program was strikingly manifested in the elections of 1866. This was essentially a contest for popular support between Johnson and the Radicals. The Radicals could point to recent events in the South—bloody race riots in which Negroes were the victims—as further evidence of the inadequacy of Johnson's policy. Johnson harmed his own cause by the intemperate, brawling speeches he made on a stumping tour from Washington to Chicago and back. The voters returned to Congress an overwhelming majority of Republicans, most of them of the Radical variety. In the Senate the line-up of the parties was 42 Republicans to 11 Democrats; in the House, 143 Republicans to 49 Democrats. Now the Republicans could enact any kind of

Reconstruction plan they could themselves agree on. Confidently they looked forward to the struggle with Johnson that would ensue when Congress assembled in December 1866—and to their final victory over the President.

### **THE CONGRESSIONAL PLAN**

After compromising differences among themselves and with the Moderates, the Radicals formulated their third plan of Reconstruction in three bills that passed Congress in the early months of 1867. All three were vetoed by Johnson and repassed. As these Reconstruction Acts were really parts of one piece, their provisions may be studied as a unit.

This plan was based squarely on the principle that the seceded states had lost their political identity. The Lincoln-Johnson governments were declared to have no legal standing, and the ten seceded states (Tennessee was now out of the Reconstruction process) were combined into five military districts. Each district was to be put in the charge of a military commander, supported by troops, who was to prepare his provinces for readmission as states. To this end, he was to have made a registration of voters, which was to include all adult Negro males and white males who were not disqualified for participation in rebellion. The whites who were excluded were those coming under the disability of the Fourteenth Amendment; but each voter had to swear a complicated loyalty oath, and the registrars were empowered to reject white men on the suspicion that they were not acting in good faith.

After the registration was completed in each province, the commanding general was to call on the voters to elect a convention to prepare a new state constitution that had to provide for Negro suffrage. If this document were ratified by the voters, elections for a state government could be held. Finally, if Congress approved the constitution, if the state legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, and if this amendment were adopted by the required number of states and became a part of the Constitution—then the state was to be restored to the Union.

By 1868 six of the former Confederate states—Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, and Florida—had

**WHERE HISTORIANS DISAGREE**

## **The Nature of Reconstruction**

Historical writing on Reconstruction, even more controversial than that on the Civil War, similarly reflects the patterns of thought that have prevailed from time to time. The first professional historian of Reconstruction, William A. Dunning, who taught at Columbia University from the 1880s to the 1920s, carried on his work during a period when scholars generally held that certain racial and ethnic groups were inherently superior to others. Dunning assumed that Negroes were inferior and hence unfit to receive the vote. Many of his students wrote books dealing with Reconstruction in particular states, and he himself provided a general account, *Reconstruction, Political and Economic* (1907), which for many years was accepted as authoritative. According to Dunning and the members of the "Dunning school," the Republicans imposed their Radical program upon the South mainly to keep their party in power. (Some later writers, notably Howard K. Beale, added an economic motive—to protect Northern business interests.) Under the Radical plan, the Southern states suffered the agonies of "bayonet rule" and "Negro rule," when with army support the blacks and their unscrupulous white accomplices plundered the people in an unbelievable orgy of corruption, ruinous taxation, and astronomical increases in the public debt.

The first historian seriously to challenge the Dunning interpretation was the Negro scholar William E. B. Du Bois. In an article in the *American Historical Review* (1910) Du Bois pointed out that the misdeeds of the Reconstruction state governments had been exaggerated and their achievements overlooked. These governments were expensive, he explained, because they undertook to provide public education and other public services on a scale never before attempted in the South. In a long book, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), Du Bois described Reconstruction politics in the Southern states as an effort on the part of the masses, black and white, to create a true democratic society. Writing under the influence of Marxism, he assumed a class consciousness for which few other historians could find much evidence.

By the 1940s the attitudes toward race, on the part of scholars at least, had drastically changed. Since that time a new generation of historians has arisen—among them C. Vann Woodward, John Hope Franklin, Eric McKittrick, and John and La Wanda Cox—who assume that the freedmen of the 1860s and 1870s, despite the handicaps of their previous servitude, were by nature quite capable of participating in self-government. According to the new historians, the Radical Republicans were motivated less by partisan or economic interests than by a determination to guarantee basic rights to the former slaves and thus to secure the war aims of reunion and freedom. There was little if anything in the South that could properly be called either military rule or Negro rule, and the Negro, carpetbagger, and scalawag politicians were at least as honest and capable as others of their time. The mistake in Reconstruction was not the attempt to confer civil and political rights upon blacks, but the failure to provide an adequate economic and educational basis and sufficient governmental protection for the assurance of those rights. The recent views are ably synthesized in Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction* (1965).

complied with the process of restoration outlined in the Reconstruction Acts and were readmitted to the Union. Delaying tactics by the whites held up the return of Mississippi, Virginia, Georgia, and Texas until 1870. These four laggard states had to meet an additional requirement, which with the existing requirements constituted the fourth and final congressional plan of Reconstruction. They had to ratify another constitutional amendment, the Fifteenth, which forbade the states and the federal government to deny the suffrage to any citizen on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

The great majority of the Northern states still denied the suffrage to Negroes at the time when the Reconstruction Acts granted it to Negroes in the Southern states. Recent attempts to give the vote to Northern blacks by amending the state constitutions had met with practically no success. Hence an amendment to the federal Constitution seemed necessary. Its sponsors were motivated by both idealistic and practical considerations. They would be consistent in extending to the Negro in the North a right they had already given to him elsewhere. At the same time they would be putting into the Constitution, where it would be safe from congressional repeal, the basis of Republican strength in the South. They were also concerned with the party's future in the North. A warning of trouble ahead had appeared in the state elections of 1867 in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, all of which went Democratic that year. "We must establish the doctrine of national jurisdiction over all the states in state matters of the franchise," the Radical leader Thaddeus Stevens now concluded. "We must thus bridle Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana et cetera, or the South being in, we shall drift into Democracy." In several of the Northern states the Negro vote, though small, would be large enough to decide close elections in favor of the Republicans.

A number of the Northern and border states refused to approve the Fifteenth Amendment, and it was adopted only with the support of the four Southern states that had to ratify it in order to be readmitted to the Union. In the case of both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, the Southern states were deemed capable of ratifying even while they were not otherwise recognized as states and had no representation in Congress.

## CONGRESSIONAL SUPREMACY

The Radicals thought of themselves as architects of a revolution, and they did not intend to let either the executive or the judiciary get in their way. They were prepared, if necessary, to establish a kind of congressional dictatorship.

To curb the President, and also to facilitate Radical administration of the acts of 1867, Congress passed two remarkable laws. One, the Tenure of Office Act (1867), forbade the President to remove civil officials, including members of his cabinet, without the consent of the Senate. Its principal purpose was to protect the job of Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, who was cooperating with the Radicals. The other law, the Command of the Army Act (1867), prohibited the President from issuing military orders except through the commanding general of the army (General Grant), whose headquarters were to be in Washington and who could not be relieved or assigned elsewhere without the consent of the Senate.

The Supreme Court, under Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, declared in *Ex parte Milligan* (1866) that military tribunals were unconstitutional in places where civil courts were functioning. Although the decision was applied to a case originating in the war, it seemed to threaten the system of military government that the Radicals were planning for the South. Radical anger at the Court was instant and intense. In Congress proposals were made to require a two-thirds majority of the justices for overruling a law of Congress, to deny the Court jurisdiction in Reconstruction cases, to reduce its membership to three, and even to abolish it. The judges apparently took the hint. When the state of Mississippi in 1867 asked for an injunction restraining Johnson from enforcing the Reconstruction Acts, the Court refused to accept jurisdiction (*Mississippi v. Johnson*). But the next year the Court agreed to hear arguments, on a writ of habeas corpus, in a case involving military courts in Mississippi (*Ex parte McCordle*) and by implication involving the legality of the Reconstruction Acts. The Radicals rushed through Congress a law denying the Court appellate jurisdiction in cases concerning habeas corpus. The Court bowed by refusing to hear the case. It bowed again in *Texas v. White* (1869), in which Chase, while accepting the Lincoln-Johnson theory that the seceded states were still in the Union, conced-



ed that Congress possessed the power to determine permanent conditions of Reconstruction.

Although the Supreme Court evaded the Reconstruction issue, it was not an ineffective agency during this period. In the entire history of the country before 1864 the Court had declared only two acts of Congress unconstitutional. During Chase's tenure (1864–1873), it voided ten of them.

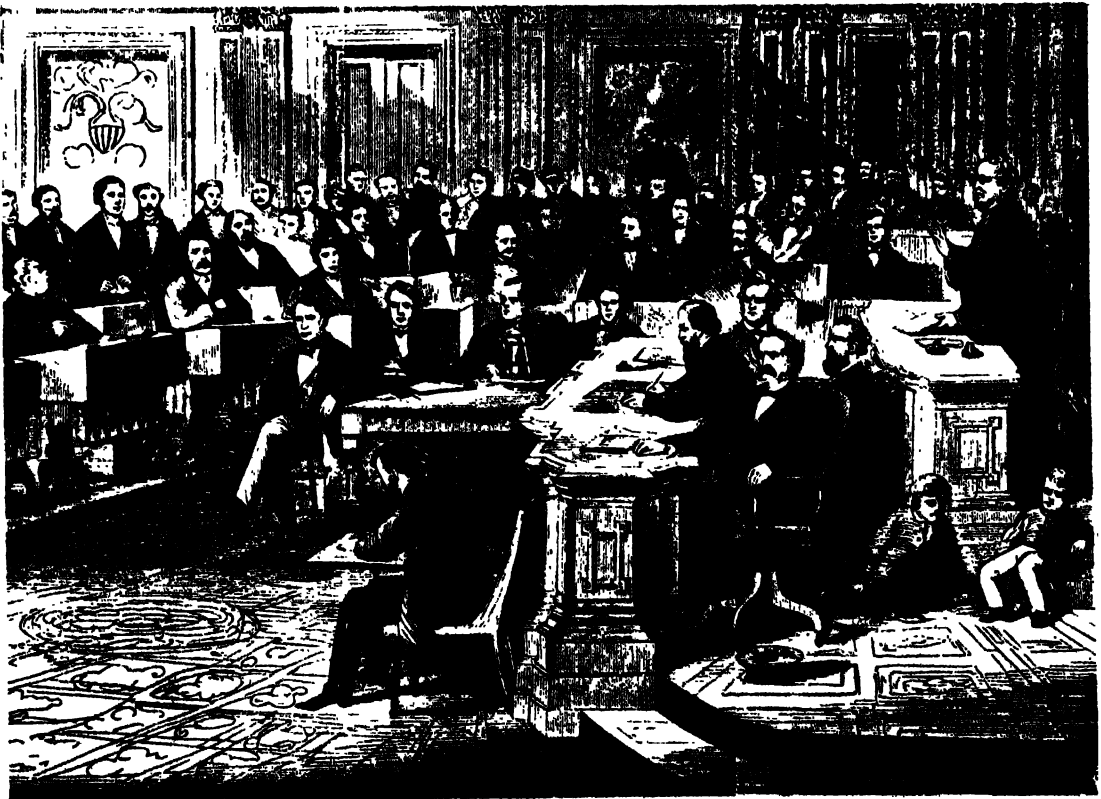
The most aggressive move of the legislative against another branch of the government occurred when the Radicals attempted to remove the President from office. They wanted to get rid of him because of his opposition to their Reconstruction program. Early in 1867 they began searching for evidence that Johnson had committed crimes or misdemeanors in office, the only legal grounds for impeachment, but they could find nothing upon which to base charges. Then he gave them a plausible reason

for action by deliberately violating the Tenure of Office Act. He suspended Secretary of War Stanton, who had worked with the Radicals against Johnson, and named General Grant as his successor. Johnson hoped in this manner to secure a Court test case of the tenure law, which he believed to be unconstitutional. But when the Senate refused to concur in the suspension, Grant relinquished the office to Stanton. Johnson then dismissed Stanton.

In the House of Representatives the elated Radicals framed and presented to the Senate eleven charges against the President. The first nine accusations dealt with the violation of the Tenure of Office Act. The tenth and eleventh charged Johnson with making speeches calculated to bring Congress into disrespect and of not faithfully enforcing the various Reconstruction Acts. In the trial before the Senate (March 25 to May 26, 1868) Johnson's lawyers main-

#### The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson

*In this print the Senate is voting on the charges against the President. Chief Justice Chase, the presiding officer, stands at the right. At the left Senator Ross of Kansas announces he votes "Not Guilty." From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (1868).*



tained that he was justified in technically violating a law in order to force a test case and that the measure did not apply to Stanton anyway: it gave tenure to cabinet members for the term of the President by whom they had been appointed, and Stanton had been appointed by Lincoln. The House managers of the impeachment stressed the theme that Johnson had opposed the will of Congress. They implied that in doing so he was guilty of crimes and misdemeanors. They brought terrific pressure upon all the Republican senators, but seven Republicans joined the twelve Democrats to vote for acquittal. On three of the charges the vote was identical, 35 to 19, one short of the required two-thirds majority. Thereupon the Radicals called off the proceedings.

### **THE RECONSTRUCTED STATES**

In the ten states of the South that were reorganized under the congressional plan, approximately one-fourth of the white men were at first excluded from voting or holding office. The voter registration of 1867 enrolled a total of 703,000 black and 627,000 white voters. The Negro voters constituted a majority in half of the states—Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana—though only in the last three of these states did the blacks outnumber the whites in the population as a whole. However, once new constitutions had been made and new governments launched, most of these permitted nearly all whites to vote (though for several years the Fourteenth Amendment continued to keep the leading ex-Confederates from holding office). This meant that in most of the Southern states the Republicans could maintain control only with the support of a great many Southern whites.

These Southern white Republicans, whom their opponents derisively called “scalawags,” consisted in part of former Whigs who, after the breakup of the Whig organization in the 1850s, had acted with the Southern Democrats but had never felt completely at home with them. Some of the scalawag leaders were wealthy (or once wealthy) planters or businessmen. James L. Alcorn, for example, had been one of the largest slaveholders in Mississippi, a Whig leader of the state, and an opponent of secession. Such men, having long controlled the Negroes as slaves, expected to control them also as vot-

ers. Many other Southern whites who joined the Republican party were farmers living in areas where slavery had been unimportant or nonexistent. These men, many of whom had been wartime Unionists, favored the Republican program of internal improvements, which would help them get their crops to market.

White men from the North also served as Republican leaders in the South. Opponents of Reconstruction referred to them as “carpetbaggers,” thus giving the impression that they were penniless adventurers who had arrived with all their possessions in a carpetbag (a then common kind of valise covered with carpeting material) in order to take advantage of the Negro vote for their own power and profit. In fact, the majority of the so-called carpetbaggers were veterans of the Union army who had looked upon the South as a new frontier, more promising than the West, and at the war’s end had settled in it as hopeful planters or business or professional men. They had brought with them money to invest, but many of them lost it because of their own inexperience and the hostility of their Southern white neighbors.

The most numerous Republicans in the South were the freedmen, the vast majority of whom had no formal education and no previous experience in the management of affairs. Among the Negro leaders, however, were well-educated, highly intelligent, and even brilliant men, most of whom had never been slaves and many of whom had been brought up in the North or abroad. The blacks quickly became politically self-conscious. In various states they held their own “colored conventions,” the one in Alabama announcing (1867): “We claim exactly the same rights, privileges and immunities as are enjoyed by white men—we ask nothing more and will be content with nothing less.” Negroes were organized, often with the assistance of Freedmen’s Bureau agents and other Northern whites, in chapters of the Union League, which had been founded originally as a Republican electioneering agency in the North during the war. At secret night meetings, with mysterious ritual, the new members of the Union League in the South received instruction in political rights and political techniques. Another organization that gave unity and self-confidence to black people was the Negro church. Once they were emancipated, they had begun to withdraw from the white churches and form their own. “The colored preachers

are the great power in controlling and uniting the colored vote," a carpetbagger observed in 1868.

Negroes served as delegates to the conventions that, under the congressional plan, drew up new state constitutions in the South. Then, in the reconstructed states, Negroes were elected to public offices of practically every kind. All together (between 1869 and 1901) twenty of them were sent to the House of Representatives in Washington. Two went to the United States Senate, both of them from Mississippi: Hiram R. Revels—an ordained minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and a former North Carolina free Negro who had been educated at Knox College in Illinois—took the Senate seat (1870) that Jefferson Davis once had occupied. Blanche K. Bruce, who

had escaped from slavery in Virginia and studied in the North, was made a senator in 1874 (he was the only Negro to be elected to a full term in the Senate until the election of Edward Brooke, of Massachusetts, in 1966).

Yet no such thing as "Negro rule" ever existed in any of the states. No Negro was elected governor, though Lieutenant-Governor P. B. S. Pinchback briefly occupied the governor's chair in Louisiana. Negroes never controlled any of the state legislatures, though they held a majority in the lower house of South Carolina. In the South as a whole the number of Negro officeholders was less than proportionate to the number of Negroes in the population. Nor did the state governments show much if any favoritism toward blacks as a group. Constitutions or statutes prohibited, on paper,

#### **Hiram R. Revels**

*Revels was one of the few Negroes to attain high office during Reconstruction, acting as United States Senator from Mississippi from 1870–1871. Born in North Carolina of free parents, Revels became a Methodist minister and during the Civil War served as an army chaplain in Mississippi. Returning to the state after the war, he resumed his ministerial duties but entered politics. He was a moderate Republican and in 1875 joined with the Democrats to overthrow the Republican state regime. For years he was president of Alcorn College, a Negro institution. (Library of Congress)*



discrimination on the basis of color, but segregation remained the common practice. Only in New Orleans were there, for a time, a few integrated schools.

The record of the Reconstruction governments is many-sided. As some of the leaders in the convention that framed the new state constitutions were Northerners, they put into these documents the most advanced provisions in those of the most progressive Northern states – provisions embodying the latest advances in local government, judicial organization, public finance, and poor relief. Generally, these changes had the effect of modernizing Southern state government and placing it in step with governmental trends in the rest of the country. But some of the provisions, which looked excellent on paper, were not suited to the peculiar environment of the rural South.

The financial program of the Republican governments was a compound of blatant corruption and well-designed, if sometimes impractical, social legislation. The corruption and extravagance are familiar aspects of the Reconstruction story. State budgets expanded to hitherto unknown totals, and state debts soared to previously undreamed of heights. In South Carolina, for example, the public debt increased from \$7 million to \$29 million in eight years.

In large measure, the corruption in the South was a phase of a national phenomenon,

with the same social force – an expanding capitalism eager to secure quick results – acting as the corrupting agent. Included in the spending programs of the Reconstruction governments were subsidies for railroads and other internal improvements, some of which materialized and some of which did not – because the promoters and the politicians pocketed the subsidies. That much of the alleged corruption was a product of deep forces in contemporary society is demonstrated by the continuance of dishonesty in state government after Republican rule was overthrown.

The state expenditures of the Reconstruction years seem huge only in comparison with the niggardly budgets of the conservative governments of the prewar era: they do not appear large when measured against the sums appropriated by later legislatures. The reconstructed governments represented the poor Negroes, and these people had a concept, albeit a vague one, of what today would be called the welfare state. They demanded public education, public-works programs, poor relief, and other services that cost money. If there were thieving and foolish spending there were also positive and permanent accomplishments, particularly in education. One example is offered by South Carolina, which in 1860 had only 20,000 children in public schools; by 1873 some 50,000 white and 70,000 Negro students were enrolled.

## **The Grant Administration**

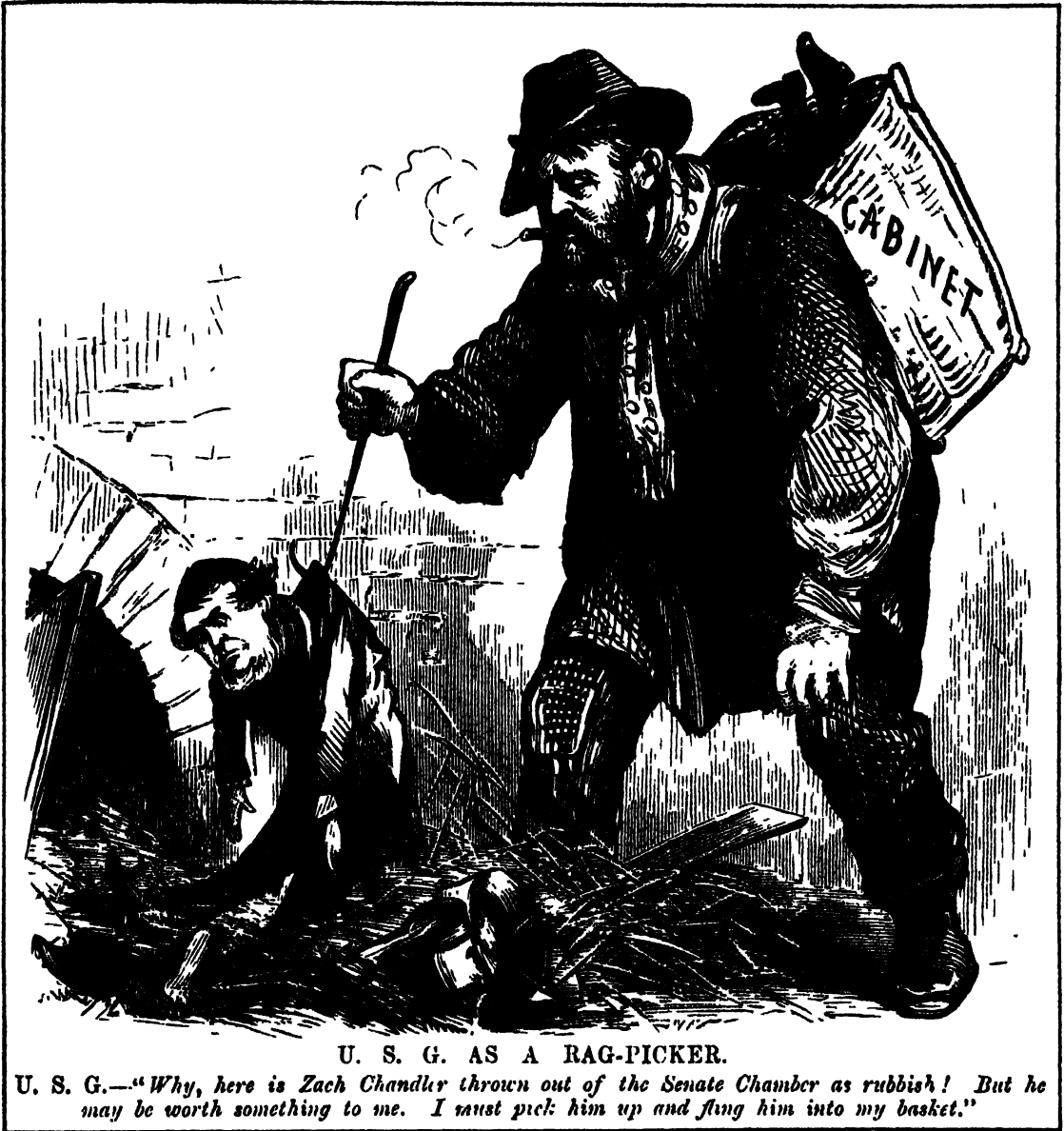
The voters looked trustingly to General Ulysses S. Grant, the conquering hero of the war, to guide them through the troubled postwar years. He was President during a time (1869–1877) that would have taxed the abilities of a master of statecraft. Only a superb politician with profound spiritual insight, some rare leader like Lincoln – could have held the presidency at that time and escaped with an unblemished reputation. Grant, for all his fine qualities, proved to be no such political leader.

### **A SOLDIER PRESIDENT**

At the end of the war both parties had angled to make Grant their candidate, and he could have had the nomination of either party. As he

watched the congressional Radicals triumph over President Johnson, he concluded that the Radical Reconstruction policy expressed the real wishes of the people. He was receptive when the Radical leaders approached him with offers of the Republican nomination.

The Republicans placed candidate Grant on an ambiguous platform. They endorsed Radical Reconstruction and Negro suffrage for the South, but declared that in the North the question of Negro voting should be determined by each state. (Thus during the campaign the Republicans opposed the suffrage amendment, the Fifteenth, which they were to pass soon after the election.) Reflecting the influence of business, the platform called for the payment of the national debt in “the spirit of the laws” under which it had been contracted, which



“U S. G as a Rag-Picker”

One of the complaints of the anti-Grant, Liberal Republicans was the President's use of the spoils system. In this cartoon from Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, Grant is pictured as a rag-picker, or junkman, because of his having retrieved Zachariah Chandler and made him Secretary of the Interior. Chandler, Republican boss of Michigan, had been defeated for reelection to the Senate in 1874 (Culver)

meant in gold instead of greenbacks on the tariff issue, the platform was discreetly silent. Obviously the Republicans meant to make Reconstruction the big issue while subordinating economic questions that might divide the party.

Unwisely the Democrats decided to meet the Republican challenge. Their platform also emphasized Reconstruction, denouncing in extravagant terms the Radical program and demanding restoration of “home rule” in the South. Thus the Democrats chose to fight the

campaign on an issue that was related to the war and its emotions—an issue that enabled their opponents to associate them with rebellion. They did, however, attempt to inject a new question of an economic nature into the contest. In 1868 approximately \$356 million of the Civil War greenbacks were in circulation, and Middle Western Democrats, led by George Pendleton of Ohio, wanted to keep the paper currency and use it when legally possible to pay off the national debt. Behind this so-called Ohio idea was the larger question of retaining the greenbacks as a permanent part of the money supply. This proposal appealed to the debtor farmers of the West and also to many hard-pressed businessmen of the East. The Westerners succeeded in writing the Ohio idea into the platform, but the party nominated Horatio Seymour of New York, a gold or “sound money” man, who repudiated the currency plank.

After a bitter campaign revolving around Reconstruction and Seymour's war record as governor of New York (he had been a Peace Democrat), Grant carried twenty-six states and Seymour only eight. But Grant got only 3,012,000 popular votes to Seymour's 2,703,000, a scant majority of 310,000, and this majority was due to Negro votes in the reconstructed states of the South.

Ulysses S. Grant was the second professional soldier to be elected to the presidency (Zachary Taylor having been the first), and the last to be chosen until Dwight D. Eisenhower was selected in 1952. After graduating from West Point with no particular distinction, Grant had entered the regular army, from which after years of service he resigned under something of a cloud. In civilian life he undertook several dismal ventures that barely yielded him a living. His career before 1861 could be characterized as forty years of failure. Then came the Civil War, and Grant found at last the one setting, the one vocation for which he was supremely equipped—war.

His political naïveté as President was displayed in many of his appointments. For the important office of secretary of state he chose an old friend, the former Illinois Congressman Elihu B. Washburne. By agreement, Washburne was to hold the position only a week before resigning to become minister to France, the purpose being to enable him to brag in Par-

is that he had headed the foreign office. After offering the appointment to another man, who declined it on the grounds of expense, Grant named Hamilton Fish of New York. Like other Americans of the time, Grant inordinately admired millionaires, and he appointed A. T. Stewart, a wealthy merchant, secretary of the treasury. Stewart, however, was ineligible because of a law barring from the office any person in “trade or commerce.”

In choosing his official family, Grant proceeded as if he were creating a military staff. He sent several appointments to the Senate for confirmation without asking the recipients if they would serve; they first heard the news in the papers. Fish, who had been out of politics for twenty years, wired Grant that he could not accept, but his name was already being acted on in the Senate and he was persuaded to let it go through. During his two administrations, Grant named a total of twenty-five men to the cabinet. Most of his later appointments went to men who were, at best, average, and some to men who were incompetent or corrupt, or both. Increasingly, in dispensing cabinet and executive patronage, Grant came to rely on the machine leaders in the party, on the groups most ardently devoted to the spoils system.

## **SUCCESSES IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

In foreign affairs the Grant administration achieved its most brilliant successes, as the Johnson administration also had done. These were the accomplishments of two outstanding secretaries of state: William H. Seward (1861–1869) and Hamilton Fish (1869–1877).

An ardent expansionist and advocate of a vigorous foreign policy, Seward acted with as much daring as the demands of Reconstruction politics and the Republican hatred of President Johnson would permit. By exercising firm but patient pressure, he persuaded Napoleon III of France to abandon his Mexican empire, which was established during the war when the United States was in no position to protest. Napoleon withdrew his troops in 1867, his puppet Emperor Maximilian was executed by the Mexicans, and the validity of the Monroe Doctrine was strikingly reaffirmed.

When Russia let it be known that she would like to sell Alaska to the United States,

the two nations long having been on friendly terms, Seward readily agreed to pay the asking price of \$7 2 million Only by strenuous efforts was he able to induce the Senate to ratify the treaty and the House to appropriate the money (1867-1868) Critics jeered that the secretary had bought a useless frozen wasteland - "Seward's Icebox" and "Walrussia" were some of the terms employed to describe it - but Alaska, a center for the fishing industry in the North Pacific and potentially rich in such resources as gold, was a distinct bargain Seward was not content with expansion in continental

#### Hamilton Fish

*Fish, a member of a distinguished New York family, had been out of politics for years when Grant offered him the position of Secretary of State Accepting it reluctantly, he served for both of Grant's terms, and left a record of solid accomplishments Fish represented the older tradition of cultivated gentlemen in politics This sketch, almost a caricature, exaggerates some of his features but still conveys his aura of dignity (Culver)*



North America In 1867 he engineered the annexation of the tiny Midway Islands west of Hawaii

In contrast with its sometimes shambling course in domestic politics, the performance of the Grant administration in the area of foreign affairs was generally decisive and firm, yet showing a wise moderation For this, Secretary Fish, to whom President Grant gave almost a free hand, deserves the major credit A number of delicate and potentially dangerous situations confronted Fish from the beginning, but the most serious one arose out of strained relations with Great Britain

The United States had a burning grievance against England which had originated during the Civil War At that time the British government, according to the American interpretation, had violated the laws of neutrality by permitting Confederate cruisers, the *Alabama* and others, to be built and armed in English shipyards and let loose to prey on Northern commerce American demands that England pay for the damages committed by these vessels became known as the "Alabama claims" Although the British government realized its diplomatic error in condoning construction of the cruisers (in a future war American built *Alabamas* might operate against Britain), it at first hesitated to submit the issue to arbitration

Other differences clouded Anglo-American relations England contended that the United States should compensate British subjects who had suffered property losses in the way of cotton and ships during the war The ancient controversy of the North Atlantic fisheries and American rights off Canadian shores had flared up again Another dispute involved the location of the boundary between the United States and British Columbia in Puget Sound And finally there were the Fenians - the Irish-American crusaders who thought they could free Ireland of British rule by conquering Canada Several times during the Johnson-Grant period Fenian "armies" harassed the Canadian border Although the American government tried to restrain these outbreaks, it refused British suggestions that it should pay for the damages committed by the Fenians

Seward tried earnestly to settle the Alabama claims before leaving office The American minister to England, Reverdy Johnson,

negotiated an agreement, the Johnson-Clarendon Convention (1869), providing that all claims on both sides since 1853 be submitted to arbitration. The pact was distasteful to Americans because it embraced so many issues and contained no expression of British regret for the escape of the *Alabama*. Coming before the Senate immediately after Grant took office, it was rejected 54 to 1. The debate featured a speech by Charles Sumner, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, denouncing Britain for her course in the Civil War and arguing that her conduct had prolonged the war by two years. Therefore, said Sumner, England owed the United States for "direct damages" committed by the cruisers and "indirect damages" for the cost of the war for two years—which would have reached the staggering total of some \$2 billion. Americans who supported Sumner's position, and they were undoubtedly a majority, professed themselves willing to accept the cession of Canada as a substitute for a cash payment.

England naturally would have nothing to do with any arrangement involving indirect claims, and settlement of the problem was temporarily stalled. Secretary Fish, however, continued to work for a solution, and finally in 1871 the two countries agreed to the Treaty of Washington, one of the great landmarks in international pacification, providing for arbitration of the cruiser issue and other pending controversies. The *Alabama* claims were to be laid before a five-member tribunal appointed by the governments of the United States, England, Italy, Switzerland, and Brazil. In the covenant Britain expressed regret for the escape of the *Alabama* and agreed to a set of rules governing neutral obligations that virtually gave the British case away. In effect, this meant that the tribunal would have only to fix the sum to be paid by Britain. Convening at Geneva in Switzerland, the arbitrators awarded \$15.5 million to the United States.

The other disputes covered by the treaty were compromised just as pacifically. The question of the Puget Sound boundary was submitted to the German Emperor, who ruled in favor of the United States title to the contested San Juan Islands. An arbitration commission awarded nearly \$2 million to England for damages suffered by her citizens during the Civil War. Because the treaty had extended American fishing privileges, England claimed a

payment for the concessions, and a special commission, after some wrangling, decided in 1877 that the United States should compensate Britain with \$5.5 million. If the value of the arbitrations were computed in money, which of course it really could not be, the United States thus netted approximately \$8 million from the awards. The real and enduring significance of the procedure was that again the two countries—as they had been doing since 1818—adjusted serious differences without resorting to force.

### **THE LIBERALS DEFECT**

Through both his foreign and his domestic policies, President Grant antagonized and alienated a number of prominent Republicans, among them the famous Radical, Charles Sumner. Senator Sumner's extravagant demand for damages from Great Britain embarrassed Secretary Fish in the latter's diplomacy. Still worse, from the President's point of view, Sumner blocked a treaty for the annexation of Santo Domingo, a project in which Grant took a deep personal interest—indeed, it was a kind of *mopomania* with him. The angry President got revenge by inducing his Senate friends to remove Sumner from the chairmanship of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Sumner and other Republican leaders joined with civil-service reformers to criticize Grant for his use of the spoils system, his reliance on ruthless machine politicians. Scholarly journalists like E. L. Godkin of the *Nation* and George William Curtis of *Harper's Weekly* were arguing that the government ought to base its appointments not on services to the party but on fitness for office as determined by competitive examinations, as the British government already was doing. Grant yielded to the extent of recommending the establishment of a Civil Service Commission, which Congress authorized in 1871, to devise a system of hiring based on merit. This agency, under the headship of Curtis, proposed a set of rules that seemed to meet Grant's approval. But Grant was not really much interested in reform, and even if he had been he could not have persuaded his followers to accept a new system that would undermine the very basis of party loyalty—the patronage. Congress, by neglecting to renew the commission's appropriation, soon ended its existence.



## FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER



### A REMARKABLE SACRIFICE.

U. S. G.—“I don't want to go to Washington; I want to go to the races with Tom, Murp, &c.”  
R. C—G.—“Oh, but you must make a sacrifice now, and after election you can go to as many races as you like.”

#### Grant Wants to Go to the Horse Races

This print depicts a widely held impression of Grant. Because the President admired fine horses, it was believed that he liked racing and gambling. Grant, shown here as an obvious weakling, is saying that he does not want to go to the White House but to the races. Two party bosses, Roscoe C. Conkling and Oliver P. Morton, are forcing him to shoulder his political responsibilities. From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (1872)

Republican critics of the President also denounced him for his support of Radical Reconstruction. He continued to station federal

troops in the South, and on numerous occasions he sent them to the support of Negro-and-carpetbag governments that were on the point

of collapsing. To growing numbers in the North this seemed like dangerous militarism, and they were more and more disgusted by the stories of governmental corruption and extravagance that came up from the South. Some Republicans were beginning to suspect that there was corruption not only in the Southern state governments but also in the federal government itself. Still others criticized Grant because he had declined to speak out in favor of a reduction of the tariff. The high wartime duties remained substantially unchanged even though the wartime justification for them was past.

Thus, before the end of Grant's first term, members of his own party had begun to oppose him for a variety of reasons—his foreign policies, his use of the patronage, his resort to military force in the South, his high-tariff stand, and his suspected taint of corruption—all of which added up to what the critics called "Grantism." In 1872, hoping to prevent Grant's reelection, his opponents bolted the party. Referring to themselves as Liberal Republicans, they proceeded to set up their own organization for running presidential and vice-presidential candidates.

The greatest weakness of the Liberal movement lay in its diversity and disunity. This was cruelly exposed when the Liberals held their national convention and began to consider a platform. They were able to agree on resolutions that approved of civil-service reform and endorsed the basic policy of Reconstruction, but called for universal amnesty (with the restoration of full political rights to former Confederates) and the withdrawal of troops from the South. When the tariff question came up, however, the convention found itself hopelessly divided. The delegates finally compromised on an evasive plank referring the issue to the people and Congress. This evasion lessened the Liberals' chances of gaining Democratic endorsement and Southern support. They compounded their blunder in choosing a nominee. Passing over Charles Francis Adams and other able and available men, they named Horace Greeley, veteran editor and publisher of the *New York Tribune*.

Greeley over a course of thirty years had stated his position on practically every issue before the country. He had been a Whig and a Republican, a proponent of antislavery and a high tariff, an economic and political national-

ist. Impulsive and erratic, he had crusaded for most of the fads that had at one time or another intrigued popular attention—spiritualism, vegetarianism, and others—and he cultivated an idiosyncratic dress and manner. With his record and personality, he was hardly the strongest candidate the Liberals could have put forward to attract the Democratic, Southern, and independent vote. The Democratic convention, seeing in his candidacy the only chance to unseat the Republicans, endorsed him with no great enthusiasm. Despite his recent attacks on Radical Reconstruction, many Southerners, remembering Greeley's own Radical past, prepared to stay at home on Election Day. The Republicans, with Grant as their standard-bearer and a platform justifying Reconstruction and calling for a high tariff, moved into the campaign with confidence.

To everybody's surprise, Greeley turned out to be a vigorous and hard-hitting campaigner. Breaking with precedent, he stumped the country advocating the Liberal cause. But the factors surrounding his candidacy made the odds against him impossible. In November Grant polled 286 electoral votes and 3,597,000 popular votes to Greeley's 62 and 2,834,000. The optimistic editor carried only two Southern and four border states. Three weeks later Greeley, apparently crushed by his defeat, died.

During the campaign the first of a series of political scandals had come to light. Although the wrongdoing had occurred before Grant took office, it involved his party and the onus for it fell on his administration. This scandal originated with the *Crédit Mobilier* construction company that helped build the Union Pacific Railroad. In reality, the *Crédit Mobilier* was controlled by a few Union Pacific stockholders who awarded huge and fraudulent contracts to the construction company, thus milking the Union Pacific, a company of which they owned a minor share, of money which in part came from government subsidies. To avert a congressional inquiry into the deal, the directors, using Oakes Ames, a Massachusetts representative, as their agent, sold at a discount (in effect gave) *Crédit Mobilier* stock to key members of Congress. A congressional investigation was held, and it revealed that some high-placed Republicans had accepted stock, including Schuyler Colfax, now Grant's Vice President.

One dreary episode followed another in Grant's second term. Benjamin H. Bristow, Grant's third secretary of the treasury, discovered that some of his officials and a group of distillers operating as a "Whiskey Ring" were cheating the government out of taxes by means of false reports. Among the prominent Republicans involved was the President's private secretary, Orville E. Babcock. Grant defended Babcock, appointed him to another office, and eased Bristow out of the cabinet. A House investigation revealed that William W. Belknap, secretary of war, had accepted bribes to retain an Indian-post trader in office. Belknap resigned with Grant's blessing before the Senate could act on impeachment charges brought by the House. Lesser scandals involved the Navy Department, which was suspected of selling business to contractors, and the Treasury, where John D. Sanborn, a special agent appointed to handle overdue taxes, collected \$427,000 and retained a 50-percent commission for himself and the Republican bigwigs who had placed him in the job. Not to be left out of the picture, Congress passed an act doubling the annual salary of the President from \$25,000 to \$50,000 (the first increase since George Washington's time), and raising the salaries of members of Congress from \$5,000 to \$7,500 a year. The increases were justifiable, but the country was enraged to learn that its representatives had also voted themselves two years of back pay. Bowing before a storm of denunciation, the next Congress hastened to repeal the so-called "Salary Grab."

### THE GREENBACK QUESTION

Meanwhile the Grant administration along with the country as a whole had suffered another blow when the Panic of 1873 struck. It was touched off by the failure of a leading investment banking firm, Jay Cooke and Company, the "financier of the Civil War," which had done well in the handling of government war bonds but had sunk excessive amounts in post-war railroad building. Depressions had come before with almost rhythmic regularity—in 1819, 1837, and 1857—but this was the worst one yet. It lasted four years, during which unemployment rose to 3 million, and agricultural prices fell so far that thousands of farmers, unable to meet mortgage payments, went more deeply into debt or lost their farms.

Debtors hoped the government would follow an inflationary, easy-money policy, which would have made it easier for them to pay their debts and would have helped to stimulate recovery from the depression. But President Grant and most Republicans preferred what they called a "sound" currency, which was to the advantage of the banks, moneylenders, and other creditors.

The money question, after figuring in the election of 1868, had confronted Grant and the Republicans in Congress from the beginning of his administration. The question was twofold: How should interest and principal of the war bonds be paid, and what should be the permanent place of the greenbacks in the national currency? Supporters of the Ohio idea, representing debtor interests, argued that the bonds had been purchased in greenbacks of depreciated value and should, unless stipulated otherwise by law, be redeemed in the same currency. The President favored payment in gold, and the Republican Congress moved speedily to promise redemption in "coin or its equivalent" and to enact a refunding act providing for long-term refinancing of the debt (1869–1870).

Approximately \$450 million in greenbacks had been issued during the Civil War, and \$400 million of them were still in circulation at the end of the conflict. In the Johnson administration, Congress had authorized the Treasury to reduce their quantity, but the protests of farmers and some business groups had halted further action. When Grant entered the White House, the greenback circulation was some \$356 million, and the gold value of a greenback dollar was 73 cents.

Before Congress could make any disposition of the problem, the Supreme Court intervened with a decision concerning the legality of the greenbacks as legal tender. In *Hepburn v. Griswold* (1870), Chief Justice Chase, speaking for a divided 4-to-3 Court, declared that greenbacks were not legal tender for debts contracted prior to their issuance. This pronouncement angered agrarians and alarmed businessmen who had incurred obligations that they would now have to pay with a more valuable dollar. Demands for a reversal of the Court's decision were insistent. It so happened that Congress was about to raise the number of justices (recently reduced to seven) back to nine, and Grant appointed two men who were known to

oppose the decision. It was charged that he had ascertained their opinions and was in effect packing the Court, but no proof of this exists. The government did, however, move immediately for a rehearing, and in *Knox v. Lee* (1871) the Court by a 5-to-4 vote reversed the previous decision.

With the legality of greenbacks established, the Treasury, as a relief measure after the Panic of 1873, increased the amount in circulation. For the same reason Congress, in the following year, voted to raise the total to \$400 million. Grant, responding to pressures from the financial interests, vetoed the measure. In 1875 the Republican Congress enacted the Resumption Act, providing that after January 1, 1879, the government would exchange gold dollars for greenbacks and directing the gov-

ernment to acquire a gold reserve for redemption purposes. The law had its intended result: with the specie value of greenbacks assured, they were equal in worth to gold. The interests of the creditor classes were adequately protected, but at the same time, the debtor groups could take some comfort in the retention of the greenbacks. (Subsequently, in 1878, Congress decided that some \$346 million of greenbacks should form a permanent part of the money supply.) Not all the agrarian-debtor groups accepted resumption as a satisfactory conclusion. Some dissident elements created the National Greenback party in 1875, which was active in the next three presidential elections. It failed, however, to attract wide support. After 1879 those interests favoring inflation would turn to forms of currency other than paper.

## **A Return to White Supremacy**

The period of Republican control in the South varied from state to state. In a few states the Democrats (or Conservatives) got into power as soon or almost as soon as restoration occurred. The longest that Republican rule lasted in any of the states was about ten years. It was ended in Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia in 1870; in Texas in 1873; in Alabama and Arkansas in 1874; in Mississippi in 1875; and in South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida in 1877.

### **SOUTHERN REPUBLICANS LOSE**

In the states where the whites constituted a majority—the upper South states—overthrow of Republican control was a relatively simple matter. The whites had only to organize and win the elections. Their success was facilitated by the early restoration of the suffrage to those whites who had been deprived of it by national or state action. Presidential and congressional pardons returned the privilege to numerous individuals, and in 1872 Congress, responding to public demands to forgive the penalties of the war, enacted the Amnesty Act, which restored political rights to 150,000 ex-Confederates and left only 500 excluded from political life.

In other states, where the Negroes were in the majority or the population difference be-



**The Ku Klux Klan: A Southern View**  
*This Klan broadside depicts the organization as most Southerners saw it. The figure with the flag and sword epitomizes white culture and has overthrown the Negro enemy. Note the incendiary torch in the hand of the Negro and the broken chains symbolizing his former slave status. (Rutherford B. Hayes Library)*

tween the races was small, the whites resorted to intimidation and violence. Frankly terroristic were the secret societies that appeared in many parts of the South—the Ku Klux Klan, the Knights of the White Camellia, and others—which attempted to frighten or physically prevent Negroes from voting. Although the societies were effective, their influence has been exaggerated by writers intrigued by their romantic hooded and robed apparel and their elaborate ritual. Moving quickly to stamp out these societies, Congress passed two Force Acts (1870–1871) and the Ku Klux Klan Act (1871) which authorized the President to use

military force and martial law in areas where the orders were active.

More potent than the secret orders were the open semimilitary organizations that operated under such names as Rifle clubs, Red Shirts, and White Leagues. After the first such society was founded in Mississippi, the idea spread to other states, and the procedure employed by the clubs was called the Mississippi Plan. Briefly stated, the plan called for the whites in each community to organize and arm, and to be prepared, if necessary, to resort to force to win elections. But the heart of the scheme was in the phrase “drawing the color

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**The Ku Klux Klan: A Northern View**

*This drawing in a Northern illustrated paper shows a group of Klansmen about to murder a carpetbagger whom they have abducted. (Library of Congress)*



line." By one method or another, legal or illegal, every white man was to be forced to join the Democratic party or leave the community. By similar methods, every Negro male was to be excluded from political action; in a few states he was permitted to vote—if he voted Democratic.

Perhaps an even stronger influence than the techniques practiced by the armed bands was the simple and unromantic weapon of economic pressure. The war had freed the Negro, but he was still a laborer—a hired worker or a tenant—dependent upon the whites for his livelihood. The whites readily discovered that this dependence placed the Negro in their power. Planters refused to rent land to Republican Negroes, storekeepers refused to extend them credit, employers refused to give them work. Economic pressure was a force that the Negro could not fight. If the Radicals, in bringing the Negro to political power, had accomplished a revolution, it was a superficial one. They failed to provide the Negro with economic power, as they might have done by giving him possession of confiscated land. Hence, his political rights had no lasting basis.

Certainly the Negro's political position was hopeless without the continued backing of the Republican party and the federal government. But he was losing the support of people in the North, even of many humanitarian reformers who had worked for emancipation and Negro rights. After the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment (1870), most of the reformers convinced themselves that their long campaign in his behalf at last was over, that with the vote he ought to be able to take care of himself. Republican disillusionment with the corruption and disorders in the Southern states helped to bring about the party split of 1872, which in turn weakened the Republicans in the South still further. They beheld the discouraging spectacle of former Radical leaders like Charles Sumner and Horace Greeley now calling themselves Liberals, cooperating with the Democrats, and outdoing even them in denunciations of what they viewed as Negro-and-carpetbag misgovernment. Most of the white Republicans of the South, including some of those who had come from the North, joined the Liberal movement and went over to the Democrats. Friction between the remaining carpetbaggers and the black Republicans grew be-

cause of a well-justified feeling on the part of the blacks that they were not receiving a fair share of the power and the jobs.

When the depression came in 1873, the hard times aggravated political discontent both North and South. In the congressional elections of 1874 the Democrats gained a majority of the seats in the national House of Representatives. After 1875, when the new House met, the Republicans no longer controlled the whole Congress, as they had done since the beginning of the war. And President Grant, in view of the changing temper of the North, no longer was willing to use military force to save from violent overthrow the Republican regimes that were still standing in the South. In 1875, when the Mississippi governor, Adelbert Ames (originally from Maine), appealed to Washington for troops to protect the Negroes from the terrorism of the Democrats, he received in reply a telegram that quoted Grant as saying: "The whole public are tired out with these annual autumnal outbreaks in the South, and the great majority are now ready to condemn any interference on the part of the government."

After the Democrats had taken Mississippi, only three states were left in the hands of the Republicans—South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida. In the elections of 1876, again using terrorist tactics, the Democrats claimed victory in all three. But the Republicans maintained that they themselves had won, and they were able to continue holding office because federal troops happened to be on the scene. If the troops should be withdrawn, the last of the Republican regimes would fall. The future was to depend on the settlement of the presidential election of 1876, which was disputed in consequence of the electoral disputes in the South.

## THE COMPROMISE OF 1877

Ulysses S. Grant was eager to run for another term in 1876, and his friends among the Republican bosses tried to secure the nomination for him. But the majority of the Republican leaders ruled Grant out. Impressed by the recent upsurge of Democratic strength, which had delivered the House of Representatives and a number of state governments to the opposition party, and fearful of the third-term issue, they

## Ingersoll's Speech Nominating Blaine [1876]

At the Republican convention in 1876 Robert G. Ingersoll nominated Blaine in a speech typical of the extravagant rhetoric of the time. Like all Republican orators, Ingersoll seized the opportunity to recall the emotions of the Civil War and to equate Democrats with traitors. After this speech Blaine was known to his admirers as "the plumed knight".

*This is a grand year—a year filled with recollections of the Revolution; filled with the proud and tender memories of the past; with sacred legends of liberty; a year in which the sons of freedom will drink from the fountains of enthusiasm, a year in which the people call for a man who has preserved in Congress what our soldiers won upon the field; a year in which they call for the man who has torn from the throat of treason the tongue of slander—for the man who has snatched the mask of Democracy from the hideous face of rebellion, for this man who, like an intellectual athlete, has stood in the arena of debate and challenged all comers, and who is still a total stranger to defeat. Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen foreheads of the defamers of his country and the maligners of her honor.*

searched for a candidate who was not associated with the scandals of the past eight years and who could entice the Liberals back into the fold and unite the party until after the election.

Senator James G. Blaine of Maine offered himself, but he had recently been involved in an allegedly crooked railroad deal. In a remarkable display of oratory and effrontery, Blaine defended himself against the charge of corruption by reading to Congress some private letters that were supposed to incriminate him. Actually, he had carefully selected innocent portions of the correspondence, and many people were unconvinced. The so-called Mulligan letters hurt his chances in 1876 and would impede his career in the future.

The Republican convention passed over Blaine and other hopefuls and named as the standard-bearer Rutherford B. Hayes, a former Union army officer and congressman, three times governor of Ohio, and a champion of civil-service reform. The platform included the usual endorsements of Reconstruction and Republican economic legislation.

No personal rivalries divided the Democrats. Only one aspirant commanded serious attention, and with him as their candidate the Democrats were confident of returning to power. The bearer of the party's hopes was Governor Samuel J. Tilden of New York, whose

name had become synonymous with governmental reform. A corporation lawyer and a millionaire, Tilden had long been a power in the Democratic organization of his state, but he had not hesitated to turn against Tammany's corrupt Tweed Ring and aid in its overthrow. His fight against Tweed brought him national fame and the governorship, in which position he increased his reputation for honest administration. The Democratic platform contained some general references to the tariff and currency problems, but its emphasis was upon reform in government. It called for an end to Reconstruction and the establishment of civil service, and declared that the primary issue of the campaign was the ejection of rascals from government and the installation in their place of "honest men."

Despite the fury of the charges flung at each other by the parties in the canvass, there were almost no differences of principle between the candidates. Hayes was on record as favoring withdrawal of troops from the South, he advocated civil service, and his record for probity was equal to Tilden's. Although the New York governor, reflecting Eastern importing interests, was amenable to some kind of tariff reduction, on other economic issues he was at least as conservative as his rival. He was a gold or "sound money" man, and he believed

that government had no business interfering with economic processes. He looked on himself as a modern counterpart of Thomas Jefferson.

The November election revealed an apparent Democratic victory. In addition to the South, Tilden carried several large Northern states, and his popular vote was 4,300,000 to 4,036,000 for Hayes. But the situation was complicated by the disputed returns from Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida, whose total electoral vote was 19. Both parties claimed to have won these states, and double sets of returns were presented to Congress. Adding to the confusion was a contested vote in Oregon, where one of the three successful Republican electors was declared ineligible because he held a federal office. The Democrats contended that the place should go to the highest Democratic elector, but the Republicans insisted that according to state law the remaining electors were to fill the vacancy. The dual and disputed returns threw the outcome of the election into doubt. As tension and excitement gripped the country, two clear facts emerged from the welter of conflicting claims. Tilden had for certain 184 electoral votes, only one short of the majority. The 20 votes in controversy would determine who would be President, and Hayes needed all of them to secure the prize.

With surprise and consternation, the nation now learned that no measure or method existed to determine the validity of disputed returns. The Constitution stated: "The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted." The question was, how and by whom? The Senate was Republican and so, of course, was its president, and the House was Democratic. Constitutional ambiguity and congressional division rendered a fair and satisfactory solution of the crisis impossible. If the president of the Senate counted the votes, Hayes would be the victor. If the Senate and House judged the returns separately, they would reach opposite decisions and checkmate each other. And if the houses voted jointly, the Democrats, with a numerical majority, would decide the result. Resort to any one of these lines of action promised to divide the country and possibly result in chaos.

Not until the last days of January 1877 did Congress act to break the deadlock. Then it

created a special Electoral Commission to pass on all the disputed votes. The commission was to be composed of five senators, five representatives, and five justices of the Supreme Court. Because of the party line-up, the congressional delegation would consist of five Republicans and five Democrats. The creating law named four of the judicial commissioners, two Republicans and two Democrats. The four were to select their fifth colleague, and it was understood that they would choose David Davis, an independent Republican, thus ensuring that the deciding vote would be wielded by a relatively unbiased judge. But at this stage Davis was elected to the Senate from Illinois and suddenly resigned his seat. His place on the commission fell to a Republican. Sitting throughout February, the commission by a partisan vote of 8 to 7 decided every disputed vote for Hayes. Congress accepted the final verdict of the agency on March 2, only two days before the inauguration of the new President.

Ratification of the commission's findings was not accomplished, however, without some complicated compromising among the politicians. Behind the dealing, and partially directing it, were certain powerful economic forces with a stake in the outcome. A decision by the commission was not final until approved by Congress, and the Democrats could have prevented action by filibustering. The success of a filibuster, however, depended on concert between Northern and Southern Democrats, and this the Republicans disrupted by offering the Southerners sufficient inducement to accept the commission's findings. According to the traditional account, certain Republicans and Southern Democrats met at Washington's Wormley Hotel, and the Republicans pledged that Hayes, after becoming President, would withdraw the troops from the South. As withdrawal would mean the downfall of the last carpetbag governments, the Southerners, convinced they were getting as much from Hayes as they could get from Tilden, abandoned the filibuster.

Actually, the story behind the "Compromise of 1877" is somewhat more complex. Hayes was on record before the election as favoring withdrawal of the troops, and in any event the Democrats in the House could have forced withdrawal simply by cutting out appropriations for the army in the Reconstruction



process. The real agreement, the one that brought the Southern Democrats over, was reached before the Wormley meeting. As the price for their cooperation the Southern Democrats (among them some old Whigs) exacted from the Republicans the following pledges: the appointment of at least one Southerner to the Hayes cabinet, control of federal patronage in their sections, generous internal improvements, national aid for the Texas and Pacific Railroad, and, finally, withdrawal of the troops. The Conservatives who were running the redeemed Southern states were primarily interested in economics—in industrializing the South—and they believed that the Republican program of federal aid to business would be more beneficial for their region than the archaic state-rights policy of the Democrats.

#### DISCRIMINATION MADE LEGAL

In his inaugural address Hayes stressed the Southern problem. While he took care to say that the rights of the Negroes must be preserved, he announced that the most pressing need of the South was the restoration of “wise, honest, and peaceful local self-government”—which meant that he was going to withdraw the troops and let the whites take over control of the state governments. Hayes laid down this policy knowing that his action would lend weight to current charges that he was paying off the South for acquiescing in his election and would strengthen those critics who referred to him as “his Fraudulency.”

The President hoped to build up a “new Republican” party in the South composed of whatever conservative white groups could be weaned away from the Democrats and committed to some acceptance of Negro rights. But his efforts, which included a tour of Southern cities, failed to produce any positive results. Although many Southern leaders sympathized with the economic credo of the Republicans, they could not advise their people to support the party that had imposed Reconstruction. Nor were Southerners pleased by Hayes’ bestowal of offices on carpetbaggers who now had to leave the section or by his vetoes of Democratic attempts to repeal the Force Acts. The “solid South” had come into existence, and there was nothing Hayes or any Republican could do to crack it.

The withdrawal of the troops was a symbol that the national government was giving up its attempt to control Southern politics and to determine the place of the Negro in Southern society. The surrender, it is to be noted, was made by the Republicans. They could yield with good grace because after 1877 they had no particular need for the support of the reconstructed South. The economic legislation of the war and postwar years was safe from repeal; industry was securely entrenched in the national economy; and Republican dominance could be maintained without Southern votes.

Another symbol of retreat was furnished by the Supreme Court, which in a series of decisions emasculated the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments of much of their significance. In the Civil Rights Cases (1883) the Court took the position that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibited states from discriminating against people on account of color but did not restrict private individuals or organizations. That is, railroads, hotels, theaters, and the like could legally practice segregation. Eventually the Court validated state legislation that discriminated against Negroes. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), a case involving a law that required separate seating arrangements for the races on railroads, the Court held that separate accommodations did not deprive the Negro of equal rights if the accommodations were equal. And in *Cumming v. County Board of Education* (1899) the Court held that laws establishing separate schools for whites and Negroes were valid if the facilities were equal for both.

The men who came to power in the South after 1877 were not in the old agrarian planter tradition. Known as “Bourbons” or “Redeemers,” they were industrialists or would-be industrialists. They preached the industrialization of the South through the importation of Northern capital, a policy of low taxes to attract business, and a political alliance with the Northeast instead of with the South’s traditional ally, the West. Controlling state governments through the medium of the Democratic party, which as a result of Reconstruction was the only party in the section, they practiced a program marked by economy in government, reduced taxes, and few social services. They did not attempt to abolish Negro suffrage but instead used the Negro vote to maintain white power, as men of their class had tried to use it

## **The Plight of the Negro [1880]**

Frederick Douglass, famous as an escaped slave who had become an abolitionist orator, remained the outstanding spokesman for black Americans after the Civil War. On August 1, 1880, he said in a speech to a great convention of blacks in Elmira, New York:

*We have laid the heavy hand of the constitution upon the matchless meanness of caste, as well as upon the hell-black crime of slavery. We have declared before all the world that there shall be no denial of rights on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. The advantage gained in this respect is immense.*

*It is a great thing to have the supreme law of the land on the side of justice and liberty. It is the line up to which the nation is destined to march—the law to which the nation's life must ultimately conform. It is a great principle, up to which we may educate the people, and to this extent its value exceeds all speech.*

*But today, in most of the Southern States, the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments are virtually nullified.*

*The rights which they were intended to guarantee are denied and held in contempt. The citizenship granted in the fourteenth amendment is practically a mockery, and the right to vote, provided for in the fifteenth amendment, is literally stamped out in face of government. The old master class is today triumphant, and the newly-enfranchised class in a condition but little above that in which they were found before the rebellion.*

during Reconstruction. Negroes continued to vote after the return of white supremacy, but in reduced numbers. In some states they were prevented from voting by an implied threat of force; in others, their influence was nullified by tricky devices—tissue ballots and a complicated arrangement of ballot boxes—that disqualified their votes. But in many areas the black vote was a purchased and directed vote, paid for by the Bourbons and used by them to beat down attempts of the farmers to take over control of the Democratic party.

Not until the 1890s did the Southern states pass laws to disfranchise the Negroes, and the impetus for the attempt was furnished by the white farmers. The farmers demanded disfranchisement because they were opposed for racial reasons to Negro voting and because they objected to the Negro vote being employed against them. The rich whites acquiesced, partly out of a desire to placate the white masses and partly because in the agrarian unrest that characterized the nineties the farmers in some states had sought to get the Negro vote on their side. The threat of competition for the Negro vote frightened all whites, and there was a general feeling that the time had come to close ranks if white supremacy was to be maintained.

In devising laws to disfranchise the Negroes, the Southern states had to take care to evade the intent of the Fifteenth Amendment. That measure did not confer suffrage upon the Negroes but merely prohibited states from denying it because of color. The Southern problem, then, was to exclude Negroes from the franchise without seeming to base the exclusion on race. Two devices were widely employed before 1900. One was the poll tax or some form of property qualification. The other was the literacy and understanding test, which required a voter to demonstrate an ability to read and to interpret the Constitution. The reasoning behind the latter law was that local registrars could administer an impossible reading test to Negroes or rule that their interpretation of the Constitution was inadequate. Both of these devices could be used, and were used, to deny the franchise to poor white men, who protested against tests being applied to them. So, many states passed so-called grandfather laws, which permitted men who could not meet the literacy and property qualifications to be admitted to the suffrage if their ancestors had voted before 1867 or some date before Reconstruction began.

The Supreme Court proved as compliant in ruling on the disfranchising laws as it was in

dealing with the civil-rights cases. Although the Court eventually voided the grandfather laws, it validated the literacy tests (*Williams v. Mississippi*, 1898) and manifested a general willingness to let the Southern states define suffrage standards—provided the evasions of the Fifteenth Amendment were not too glaring.

One Negro leader believed that his race would have to acquire economic independence before it could ask for complete social acceptance. This was Booker T. Washington, who became the head of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, an industrial school for Negroes, and eventually the spokesman for a large segment of his people. Washington feared that in what he called “the great leap from slavery to freedom” the Negroes had forgotten that they would have to live by the work of their hands. Therefore, he preached that education for Negroes should stress industrial and practical aspects rather than classical matters. Eventually Washington evolved a whole new concept of race relations. He set it forth in a speech at Atlanta in 1895. Known as the Atlanta Compromise, it proposed that for the time the Negro eschew agitation for social equality and devote his efforts to achieving economic security. Upper-class whites approved Washington’s philosophy and supported his endeavors, as did some wealthy whites in the North. Most Negroes also accepted the Atlanta strategy, but some were soon to reject it as too passive.

As the turn of the century approached, Southern whites seemed to have won a com-

plete victory over the outside influences that had sought to disturb their way of life, and Reconstruction seemed to these people like a bad dream receding into the past. But the deep and turbulent forces generated in the years between 1865 and 1877 were only temporarily exhausted. They would appear again as Americans continued to search for solutions to the problems left by the Civil War and its troubled aftermath.

### THE “NEW SOUTH”

With relative rapidity, the South recovered from the effects of war and restored its economic life. Since it was an agricultural society, its productive powers rested on the basis of land, and the land had survived the war. The chief problem was to get the plantations and farms under cultivation again. Work began at once (crops were harvested in 1865), and progress was steady. By 1879 the cotton crop exceeded that of 1860, part of the increase resulting from the opening of new growing areas west of the Mississippi, in Texas and Arkansas.

The rehabilitation of the South’s economy was accomplished with relatively few changes in its agriculture. There was something of a shift in the distribution of land ownership, resulting in an increase in the number of small holders. In the economic travail following the war, many planters were unable to hold on to their property and were forced to offer their

### **Plessy v. Ferguson [1896]**

In this famous case the Supreme Court held that enforced separate facilities for Negroes did not imply that Negro people were inferior and did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment.

*The object of the amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political, equality, or a commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either. Laws permitting, and even requiring their separation in places where they are liable to be brought into contact do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other, and have been generally, if not universally, recognized as within the competency of the state legislatures in the exercise of their police power. The most common instance of this is connected with the establishment of separate schools for white and colored children, which have been held to be a valid exercise of the legislative power even by courts of states where the political rights of the colored race have been longest and most earnestly enforced. . . .*

land for sale at low prices. In many cases the purchasers were white yeomen. According to the census, the number of farms in Mississippi increased from 43,000 in 1860 to 68,000 by 1870; in South Carolina from 33,000 to 52,000; and in Louisiana from 17,000 to 28,000. Actually, these figures are somewhat deceptive because some of the farms listed were under ten or twenty acres in area and were really units in a plantation, worked by tenants who were sometimes white but usually Negro.

The plantation system was modified, but it did not disappear. In the ownership of the system, however, an important change took place. The old planter (or the old type of planter who lived on the plantation) tended to disappear. More and more, the large land units were owned and administered by merchants, banks, and corporations—or by planters who lived in towns or cities where they could devote themselves to business as well as agriculture.

During the Reconstruction period, perhaps a third or more of the farmers in the South were tenants; by 1900 the figure had increased to 70 percent. Several factors accounted for the trend toward tenancy. The Negroes, when they became freedmen, had, of course, no property. They were forced, as a simple matter of survival, to become laborers or tenants, and most of them were unable to accumulate enough resources to rise above this status. As late as 1890 there were only 121,000 Negro landowners in the South. Probably the strongest influence promoting tenancy among both races was the lack of an adequate credit system, with a resulting scarcity of money. The National Bank System was slow to establish itself in the Southern states, and state banks were slow to recover from the effects of the war. Landlords did not have enough cash to hire laborers to work their land, and laborers could not secure loans to buy land or even raise sufficient currency to rent land on a cash basis.

Out of this situation developed an economic arrangement peculiar to the South, the sharecrop and crop-lien system, in which produce and labor took the place of money. There were share tenants and sharecroppers, and there was a difference between the two groups. The share tenants, most of whom were whites, worked strips of land on a large unit and paid as rent to the landlord one-fourth to one-third of their crop; they provided their own

tools, seed, stock, and other supplies. The sharecroppers, most of whom were Negroes, provided nothing but their own labor. For the average cropper, the landlord would furnish all the previously mentioned materials, and a horse or mule and a house as well. In addition, until the crop was harvested he would arrange credit facilities for the cropper and his family at a local country store owned by himself or a merchant. The cropper, for his part, agreed to consign from one-third to one-half of his crop to the landlord. Moreover, the storekeeper, the source of credit, protected his interest by taking a mortgage or lien on the tenant's share of the crop. (As time passed, the landlord and the merchant tended to become one person, and the planter-storekeeper became a major figure in the Southern credit complex.)

The lien system was a necessary credit device in the postwar years; but when it was continued and expanded after that period, it had a harmful influence upon Southern agriculture. The merchant or landlord pressed the cropper to produce a single money crop, cotton, to the neglect of diversified farming and scientific farming methods. More serious were the social results of the system. The typical sharecropper was an unlettered person who did not know how to handle his own money carefully and who did not understand the mechanics of credit. Frequently, after harvesting his crop, he found himself owing money to the storekeeper and hence forced to pledge his labor to the same source for another year. Not only did the lien system prevent tenants from rising to the owning class, but it also operated to bind them to particular pieces of land, to create a state of peonage. The Negro sharecropper was not a slave, but he was not completely free.

The Reconstruction period witnessed a restoration of Southern industrial facilities damaged or destroyed during the war, as well as some promising beginnings in new industrial activities. Most of the rehabilitation and expansion was financed with local, Southern capital, which was subscribed by the people of a town who wanted to improve their community by locating a factory in it. The only Southern enterprise that attracted Northern and European investors was the railroad. With outside aid, the war-weakened rail system was soon put in running order again, and by 1873 over 4,000

miles of new track had been constructed. Modest but noteworthy progress was recorded in tobacco manufacturing, in the lumber industry, and in iron making.

The most substantial growth occurred in textiles, which had a prewar basis to build on. Southern leaders during Reconstruction preached the economic advantage of building cotton mills where the raw material was produced, and the Southern people took this logic to heart. Practically all the mills that began to appear in Southern towns were financed by local investors. By 1880 the South could boast

of 161 textile factories housing 524,000 spindles and employing 16,000 workers.

But the great industrial development of the section, the development that created the "New South," would not come until later. And even that forward economic surge would not greatly change the nature of Southern life, would not make the South very "new." As late as 1910 only 15 percent of all the people in the region were connected with manufacturing. For many years the South would remain, as it was in the Reconstruction era, a rural and a traditional land.

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# Appendices

## The Declaration of Independence

*In Congress, July 4, 1776,*

### THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of

government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:—

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the meantime, exposed to all the danger of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose, obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners,

refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in time of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined, with others, to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them by a mock trial, from punishment, for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing taxes on us without our consent:

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefit of trial by jury:

For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies:

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering, fundamentally, the powers of our governments:

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends, and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts made by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred,



to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and

declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states: that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

The foregoing Declaration was, by order of Congress, engrossed, and signed by the following members:

**JOHN HANCOCK**

**New Hampshire**

Josiah Bartlett  
William Whipple  
Matthew Thornton

**New York**

William Floyd  
Philip Livingston  
Francis Lewis  
Lewis Morris

**Delaware**

Caesar Rodney  
George Read  
Thomas M'Kean

**North Carolina**

William Hooper  
Joseph Hewes  
John Penn

**Massachusetts Bay**

Samuel Adams  
John Adams  
Robert Treat Paine  
Elbridge Gerry

**New Jersey**

Richard Stockton  
John Witherspoon  
Francis Hopkinson  
John Hart  
Abraham Clark

**Maryland**

Samuel Chase  
William Paca  
Thomas Stone  
Charles Carroll,  
of Carrollton

**South Carolina**

Edward Rutledge  
Thomas Heyward, Jr.  
Thomas Lynch, Jr.  
Arthur Middleton

**Rhode Island**

Stephen Hopkins  
William Ellery

**Pennsylvania**

Robert Morris  
Benjamin Rush  
Benjamin Franklin  
John Morton  
George Clymer  
James Smith  
George Taylor  
James Wilson  
George Ross

**Virginia**

George Wythe  
Richard Henry Lee  
Thomas Jefferson  
Benjamin Harrison  
Thomas Nelson, Jr.  
Francis Lightfoot Lee  
Carter Braxton

**Georgia**

Button Gwinnett  
Lyman Hall  
George Walton

**Connecticut**

Roger Sherman  
Samuel Huntington  
William Williams  
Oliver Wolcott

*Resolved*, That copies of the Declaration be sent to the several assemblies, conventions, and committees, or councils of safety, and to the several commanding officers of the continental troops; that it be proclaimed in each of the United States, at the head of the army.

# The Constitution of the United States of America<sup>1</sup>

**WE** the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

## **Article I**

### **SECTION 1.**

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

### **SECTION 2.**

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty-five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

[Representatives and direct Taxes<sup>2</sup> shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.]<sup>3</sup> The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every

subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

### **SECTION 3.**

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one-third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

<sup>1</sup>This version, which follows the original Constitution in capitalization and spelling, was published by the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, in 1935.

<sup>2</sup>Altered by the Sixteenth Amendment.

<sup>3</sup>Negated by the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust, or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment, and Punishment, according to Law.

#### **SECTION 4.**

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of Chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

#### **SECTION 5.**

Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties, as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any

question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

#### **SECTION 6.**

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony, and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States shall be a Member of either House during his continuance in Office.

#### **SECTION 7.**

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections, to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by Yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be re-

turned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

#### **SECTION 8.**

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offenses against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, Dock-yards, and other needful Buildings; — And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

#### **SECTION 9.**

The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor

shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

#### SECTION 10.

No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Control of the Congress.

No state shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

### Article II

#### SECTION 1.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of

Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

[The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves; And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in the Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; a quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two-thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.]<sup>1</sup>

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No person except a natural-born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

<sup>1</sup>Revised by the Twelfth Amendment.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation, or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will, to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

#### **SECTION 2.**

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to Grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Re-

cess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

#### **SECTION 3.**

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

#### **SECTION 4.**

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors

### **Article III**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;—to all Cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls;—to all cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;—to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;—to Controversies between two or more States;—between a State and Citizens of another State;<sup>3</sup>—between Citizens of

<sup>3</sup>Qualified by the Eleventh Amendment.

different States, — between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects.

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

#### **SECTION 3.**

Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted.

### **Article IV**

#### **SECTION 1.**

Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee

from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the crime.

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.

#### **SECTION 3.**

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

#### **SECTION 4.**

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence.

### **Article V**

The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Pro-

vided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

## **Article VI**

All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before

mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

## **Article VII**

The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same.

Done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the Twelfth. In Witness whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names.<sup>a</sup>

George Washington

*President and deputy from Virginia*

### **New Hampshire**

John Langdon  
Nicholas Gilman

### **Massachusetts**

Nathaniel Gorham  
Rufus King

### **Connecticut**

William Samuel Johnson  
Roger Sherman

### **New York**

Alexander Hamilton

### **New Jersey**

William Livingston  
David Brearley  
William Paterson  
Jonathan Dayton

### **Pennsylvania**

Benjamin Franklin  
Thomas Mifflin  
Robert Morris  
George Clymer  
Thomas FitzSimons  
Jared Ingersoll  
James Wilson  
Gouverneur Morris

### **Delaware**

George Read  
Gunning Bedford, Jr.  
John Dickinson  
Richard Bassett  
Jacob Broom

### **Maryland**

James McHenry  
Daniel of  
St. Thomas Jenifer  
Daniel Carroll

### **Virginia**

John Blair  
James Madison, Jr.

### **North Carolina**

William Blount  
Richard Dobbs Spaight  
Hugh Williamson

### **South Carolina**

John Rutledge  
Charles Cotesworth Pinckn  
Charles Pinckney  
Pierce Butler

### **Georgia**

William Few  
Abraham Baldwin

<sup>a</sup>These are the full names of the signers, which in some cases are not the signatures on the document.



*Articles in Addition to, and Amendment of, the Constitution of the United States of America, Proposed by Congress, and Ratified by the Legislatures of the Several States, Pursuant to the Fifth Article of the Original Constitution<sup>7</sup>*

#### [Article I]

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

#### [Article II]

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.

#### [Article III]

No Soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

#### [Article IV]

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

#### [Article V]

No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in

<sup>7</sup>This heading appears only in the joint resolution submitting the first ten amendments.

the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

#### [Article VI]

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favour, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

#### [Article VII]

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

#### [Article VIII]

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

#### [Article IX]

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

#### [Article X]

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the

States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

[Amendments I–X, in force 1791.]

### **[Article XI]<sup>9</sup>**

The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by Citizens of another State, or by Citizens or Subjects of any Foreign State.

### **[Article XII]<sup>9</sup>**

The Electors shall meet in their respective States and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the

states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.—The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President: a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

### **[Article XIII]<sup>10</sup>**

#### **SECTION 1.**

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

#### **SECTION 2.**

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

### **[Article XIV]<sup>11</sup>**

#### **SECTION 1.**

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

<sup>9</sup>Adopted in 1798.

<sup>9</sup>Adopted in 1804.

<sup>10</sup>Adopted in 1865.

<sup>11</sup>Adopted in 1868.

## SECTION 2.

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

## SECTION 3.

No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

## SECTION 4.

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debts or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

## SECTION 5.

The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

## [Article XV]<sup>12</sup>

### SECTION 1.

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude —

### SECTION 2.

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## [Article XVI]<sup>13</sup>

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

## [Article XVII]<sup>14</sup>

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: *Provided*, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

## [Article XVIII]<sup>15</sup>

### SECTION 1.

After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of

<sup>12</sup>Adopted in 1870.

<sup>13</sup>Adopted in 1913.

<sup>14</sup>Adopted in 1913.

<sup>15</sup>Adopted in 1918.

intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

#### **SECTION 3.**

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

### **[Article XIX]<sup>16</sup>**

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

### **[Article XX]<sup>17</sup>**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The terms of the President and Vice-President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

#### **SECTION 3.**

If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice-President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the be-

ginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice-President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice-President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice-President shall have qualified.

#### **SECTION 4.**

The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice-President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

#### **SECTION 5.**

Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

#### **SECTION 6.**

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

### **[Article XXI]<sup>18</sup>**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

#### **SECTION 3.**

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the

<sup>16</sup>Adopted in 1920.

<sup>17</sup>Adopted in 1933.

<sup>18</sup>Adopted in 1933.

Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

**[Article XXII]<sup>19</sup>**

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once.

But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several states within seven years from the date of its submission to the states by the Congress.

**[Article XXIII]<sup>20</sup>**

**SECTION 1.**

The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice-President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice-President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

<sup>19</sup>Adopted in 1951.

<sup>20</sup>Adopted in 1961.

**SECTION 2.**

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**[Article XXIV]<sup>21</sup>**

**SECTION 1.**

The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

**SECTION 2.**

The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**[Article XXV]<sup>22</sup>**

**SECTION 1.**

In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

**SECTION 2.**

Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

**SECTION 3.**

Whenever the President transmits to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

**SECTION 4.**

Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of

<sup>21</sup>Adopted in 1964.

<sup>22</sup>Adopted in 1967.

the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter

written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

### **[Article XXVI]<sup>23</sup>**

#### **SECTION 1.**

The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

#### **SECTION 2.**

The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

<sup>23</sup> Adopted in 1971.

## **Sovereigns of England and Great Britain, 1485–1820**

The ruler was King (or Queen) of England until 1707, except for the interregnum of 1649–1660, during which Oliver Cromwell made himself Lord Protector. The ruler was King (or Queen) of Great Britain after the union of England and Scotland in 1707, and King (or Queen) of Great Britain and Ireland after 1800.

Henry VII 1485–1509  
Henry VIII 1509–1547  
Edward VI 1547–1553  
Mary I 1553–1558  
Elizabeth I 1558–1603

James I (VI of Scotland) 1603–1625  
Charles I 1625–1649  
    Oliver Cromwell 1650–1658  
    Richard Cromwell 1658–1659  
Charles II 1660–1685  
James II 1685–1688  
William III and Mary II 1689–1694  
William III 1694–1702  
Anne 1702–1714  
George I 1714–1727  
George II 1727–1760  
George III 1760–1820

## Admission of States to the Union\*

1 Delaware	<i>Dec. 7, 1787</i>	26 Michigan	<i>Jan. 26, 1837</i>
2 Pennsylvania	<i>Dec. 12, 1787</i>	27 Florida	<i>Mar. 3, 1845</i>
3 New Jersey	<i>Dec. 18, 1787</i>	28 Texas	<i>Dec. 29, 1845</i>
4 Georgia	<i>Jan. 2, 1788</i>	29 Iowa	<i>Dec. 28, 1846</i>
5 Connecticut	<i>Jan. 9, 1788</i>	30 Wisconsin	<i>May 29, 1848</i>
6 Massachusetts	<i>Feb. 6, 1788</i>	31 California	<i>Sept. 9, 1850</i>
7 Maryland	<i>Apr. 28, 1788</i>	32 Minnesota	<i>May 11, 1858</i>
8 South Carolina	<i>May 23, 1788</i>	33 Oregon	<i>Feb. 14, 1859</i>
9 New Hampshire	<i>June 21, 1788</i>	34 Kansas	<i>Jan. 29, 1861</i>
10 Virginia	<i>June 25, 1788</i>	35 West Virginia	<i>June 19, 1863</i>
11 New York	<i>July 26, 1788</i>	36 Nevada	<i>Oct. 31, 1864</i>
12 North Carolina	<i>Nov. 21, 1789</i>	37 Nebraska	<i>Mar. 1, 1867</i>
13 Rhode Island	<i>May 29, 1790</i>	38 Colorado	<i>Aug. 1, 1876</i>
14 Vermont	<i>Mar. 4, 1791</i>	39 North Dakota	<i>Nov. 2, 1889</i>
15 Kentucky	<i>June 1, 1792</i>	40 South Dakota	<i>Nov. 2, 1889</i>
16 Tennessee	<i>June 1, 1796</i>	41 Montana	<i>Nov. 8, 1889</i>
17 Ohio	<i>Mar. 1, 1803</i>	42 Washington	<i>Nov. 11, 1889</i>
18 Louisiana	<i>Apr. 30, 1812</i>	43 Idaho	<i>July 3, 1890</i>
19 Indiana	<i>Dec. 11, 1816</i>	44 Wyoming	<i>July 10, 1890</i>
20 Mississippi	<i>Dec. 10, 1817</i>	45 Utah	<i>Jan. 4, 1896</i>
21 Illinois	<i>Dec. 3, 1818</i>	46 Oklahoma	<i>Nov. 16, 1907</i>
22 Alabama	<i>Dec. 14, 1819</i>	47 New Mexico	<i>Jan. 6, 1912</i>
23 Maine	<i>Mar. 15, 1820</i>	48 Arizona	<i>Feb. 14, 1912</i>
24 Missouri	<i>Aug. 10, 1821</i>	49 Alaska	<i>Jan. 3, 1959</i>
25 Arkansas	<i>June 15, 1836</i>	50 Hawaii	<i>Aug. 21, 1959</i>

\*In the case of the first thirteen states, the date given is that of ratification of the Constitution.



## Presidential Elections

Year	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	Electoral Vote
1789	<b>GEORGE WASHINGTON (Va.)*</b>			69
	John Adams			34
	Others			35
1792	<b>GEORGE WASHINGTON (Va.)</b>			132
	John Adams			77
	George Clinton			50
	Others			5
1796	<b>JOHN ADAMS (Mass.)</b>	Federalist		71
	Thomas Jefferson	Democratic-Republican		68
	Thomas Pinckney	Federalist		59
	Aaron Burr	Dem.-Rep.		30
	Others			48
1800	<b>THOMAS JEFFERSON (Va.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.		73
	Aaron Burr	Dem.-Rep.		73
	John Adams	Federalist		65
	C. C. Pinckney	Federalist		64
	John Jay	Federalist		1
1804	<b>THOMAS JEFFERSON (Va.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.		162
	C. C. Pinckney	Federalist		14
1808	<b>JAMES MADISON (Va.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.		122
	C. C. Pinckney	Federalist		47
	George Clinton	Dem.-Rep.		6
1812	<b>JAMES MADISON (Va.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.		128
	De Witt Clinton	Federalist		89
1816	<b>JAMES MONROE (Va.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.		183
	Rufus King	Federalist		34
1820	<b>JAMES MONROE (Va.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.		231
	John Quincy Adams	Dem.-Rep.		1
1824	<b>JOHN Q. ADAMS (Mass.)</b>	Dem.-Rep.	108,740	84
	Andrew Jackson	Dem.-Rep.	153,544	99
	William H. Crawford	Dem.-Rep.	46,618	41
	Henry Clay	Dem.-Rep.	47,136	37
1828	<b>ANDREW JACKSON (Tenn.)</b>	Democrat	647,286	178
	John Quincy Adams	National Republican	508,064	83

\*State of residence at time of election.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<b>Popular Vote</b>	<b>Electoral Vote</b>
1832	<b>ANDREW JACKSON (Tenn.)</b>	Democrat	687,502	219
	Henry Clay	National Republican	530,189	49
	John Floyd	Independent		11
	William Wirt	Anti-Mason	33,108	7
1836	<b>MARTIN VAN BUREN (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	765,483	170
	W. H. Harrison	Whig		73
	Hugh L. White	Whig	739,795	26
	Daniel Webster	Whig		14
	W. P. Mangum	Independent		11
1840	<b>WILLIAM H. HARRISON (Ohio)</b>	Whig	1,274,624	234
	Martin Van Buren	Democrat	1,127,781	60
	J. G. Birney	Liberty	7,069	—
1844	<b>JAMES K. POLK (Tenn.)</b>	Democrat	1,338,464	170
	Henry Clay	Whig	1,300,097	105
	J. G. Birney	Liberty	62,300	—
1848	<b>ZACHARY TAYLOR (La.)</b>	Whig	1,360,967	163
	Lewis Cass	Democrat	1,222,342	127
	Martin Van Buren	Free-Soil	291,263	—
1852	<b>FRANKLIN PIERCE (N.H.)</b>	Democrat	1,601,117	254
	Winfield Scott	Whig	1,385,453	42
	John P. Hale	Free-Soil	155,825	—
1856	<b>JAMES BUCHANAN (Pa.)</b>	Democrat	1,832,955	174
	John C. Frémont	Republican	1,339,932	114
	Millard Fillmore	American	871,731	8
1860	<b>ABRAHAM LINCOLN (Ill.)</b>	Republican	1,865,593	180
	Stephen A. Douglas	Democrat	1,382,713	12
	John C. Breckinridge	Democrat	848,356	72
	John Bell	Union	592,906	39
1864	<b>ABRAHAM LINCOLN (Ill.)*</b>	Republican	2,213,655	212
	George B. McClellan	Democrat	1,805,237	21
1868	<b>ULYSSES S. GRANT (Ill.)</b>	Republican	3,012,833	214
	Horatio Seymour	Democrat	2,703,249	80
1872	<b>ULYSSES S. GRANT (Ill.)</b>	Republican	3,597,132	286
	Horace Greeley	Democrat; Liberal Republican	2,834,125	66
1876	<b>RUTHERFORD B. HAYES (Ohio)</b>	Republican	4,036,298	185
	Samuel J. Tilden	Democrat	4,300,590	184
1880	<b>JAMES A. GARFIELD (Ohio)</b>	Republican	4,454,416	214
	Winfield S. Hancock	Democrat	4,444,952	155

\*State of residence at time of election.

Year	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	Electoral Vote
1884	<b>GROVER CLEVELAND (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	4,874,986	219
	James G. Blaine	Republican	4,851,981	182
1888	<b>BENJAMIN HARRISON (Ind.)</b>	Republican	5,439,853	233
	Grover Cleveland	Democrat	5,540,309	168
1892	<b>GROVER CLEVELAND (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	5,556,918	277
	Benjamin Harrison	Republican	5,176,108	145
	James B. Weaver	People's	1,041,028	22
1896	<b>WILLIAM MCKINLEY (Ohio)</b>	Republican	7,104,779	271
	William J. Bryan	Democrat- People's	6,502,925	176
1900	<b>WILLIAM MCKINLEY (Ohio)</b>	Republican	7,207,923	292
	William J. Bryan	Dem.-Populist	6,358,133	155
1904	<b>THEODORE ROOSEVELT (N.Y.)</b>	Republican	7,623,486	336
	Alton B. Parker	Democrat	5,077,911	140
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	402,283	—
1908	<b>WILLIAM H. TAFT (Ohio)</b>	Republican	7,678,908	321
	William J. Bryan	Democrat	6,409,104	162
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	420,793	—
1912	<b>WOODROW WILSON (N.J.)</b>	Democrat	6,293,454	435
	Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive	4,119,538	88
	William H. Taft	Republican	3,484,980	8
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	900,672	—
1916	<b>WOODROW WILSON (N.J.)</b>	Democrat	9,129,606	277
	Charles E. Hughes	Republican	8,538,221	254
	A. L. Benson	Socialist	585,113	—
1920	<b>WARREN G. HARDING (Ohio)</b>	Republican	16,152,200	404
	James M. Cox	Democrat	9,147,353	127
	Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	919,799	—
1924	<b>CALVIN COOLIDGE (Mass.)</b>	Republican	15,725,016	382
	John W. Davis	Democrat	8,386,503	136
	Robert M. LaFollette	Progressive	4,822,856	13
1928	<b>HERBERT HOOVER (Calif.)</b>	Republican	21,391,381	444
	Alfred E. Smith	Democrat	15,016,443	87
	Norman Thomas	Socialist	267,835	—
1932	<b>FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	22,821,857	472
	Herbert Hoover	Republican	15,761,841	59
	Norman Thomas	Socialist	881,951	—
1936	<b>FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	27,751,597	523
	Alfred M. Landon	Republican	16,679,583	8
	William Lemke	Union and others	882,479	—
1940	<b>FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	27,244,160	449
	Wendell L. Willkie	Republican	22,305,198	82

Year	Candidates	Parties	Popular Vote	Electoral Vote
1944	<b>FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (N.Y.)</b>	Democrat	25,602,504	432
	Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	22,006,285	99
1948	<b>HARRY S. TRUMAN (Mo.)</b>	Democrat	24,105,695	304
	Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	21,969,170	189
	J. Strom Thurmond	State-Rights	1,169,021	38
		Democrat		
	Henry A. Wallace	Progressive	1,156,103	—
1952	<b>DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (N.Y.)</b>	Republican	33,936,252	442
	Adlai E. Stevenson	Democrat	27,314,992	89
1956	<b>DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (N.Y.)</b>	Republican	35,575,420	457
	Adlai E. Stevenson	Democrat	26,033,066	73
	Other	—	—	1
1960	<b>JOHN F. KENNEDY (Mass.)</b>	Democrat	34,227,096	303
	Richard M. Nixon	Republican	34,108,546	219
	Other	—	—	15
1964	<b>LYNDON B. JOHNSON (Tex.)</b>	Democrat	43,126,506	486
	Barry M. Goldwater	Republican	27,176,799	52
1968	<b>RICHARD M. NIXON (N.Y.)</b>	Republican	31,770,237	301
	Hubert H. Humphrey	Democrat	31,270,533	191
	George Wallace	American	9,906,141	46
		Indep.		
1972	<b>RICHARD M. NIXON (N.Y.)</b>	Republican	47,169,911	520
	George S. McGovern	Democrat	29,170,383	17
	Other	—	—	1

## Chief Justices of the United States

John Jay, *N.Y.* 1789–1795

John Rutledge, *S.C.* 1795

Oliver Ellsworth, *Conn.* 1795–1799

John Marshall, *Va.* 1801–1835

Roger B. Taney, *Md.* 1836–1864

Salmon P. Chase, *Ohio* 1864–1873

Morrison R. Waite, *Ohio* 1874–1888

Melville W. Fuller, *Ill.* 1888–1910

Edward D. White, *La.* 1910–1921

William H. Taft, *Ohio* 1921–1930

Charles E. Hughes, *N.Y.* 1930–1941

Harlan F. Stone, *N.Y.* 1941–1946

Fred M. Vinson, *Ky.* 1946–1953

Earl Warren, *Calif.* 1953–1969

Warren E. Burger, *Minn.* 1969–

## Speakers of the House of Representatives

F. A. C. Muhlenberg, *Pennsylvania* 1789–1791

Jonathan Trumbull, *Connecticut* 1791–1793

F. A. C. Muhlenberg, *Pennsylvania* 1793–1795

Jonathan Dayton, *New Jersey* 1795–1799

Theodore Sedgwick, *Massachusetts* 1799–1801

Nathaniel Macon, *North Carolina* 1801–1807

Joseph B. Varnum, *Massachusetts* 1807–1811

Henry Clay, *Kentucky* 1811–1814

Langdon Cheves, *South Carolina* 1814–1815

Henry Clay, *Kentucky* 1815–1820

John W. Taylor, *New York* 1820–1821

Philip P. Barbour, *Virginia* 1821–1823

Henry Clay, *Kentucky* 1823–1825

John W. Taylor, *New York* 1825–1827

Andrew Stevenson, *Virginia* 1827–1834

John Bell, *Tennessee* 1834–1835

James K. Polk, *Tennessee* 1835–1839

R. M. T. Hunter, *Virginia* 1839–1841

John White, *Kentucky* 1841–1843

John W. Jones, *Virginia* 1843–1845

John W. Davis, *Indiana* 1845–1847

R. C. Winthrop, *Massachusetts* 1847–1849

Howell Cobb, *Georgia* 1849–1851

Linn Boyd, *Kentucky* 1851–1855

N. P. Banks, *Massachusetts* 1856–1857

James L. Orr, *South Carolina* 1857–1859

William Pennington, *New Jersey* 1860–1861

Galusha A. Grow, *Pennsylvania* 1861–1863

Schuyler Colfax, *Indiana* 1863–1869

James G. Blaine, *Maine* 1869–1875

Michael C. Kerr, *Indiana* 1875–1876

Samuel J. Randall, *Pennsylvania* 1876–1881

Joseph W. Keifer, *Ohio* 1881–1883

John G. Carlisle, *Kentucky* 1883–1889

Thomas B. Reed, *Maine* 1889–1891

Charles F. Crisp, *Georgia* 1891–1895

Thomas B. Reed, *Maine* 1895–1899

David B. Henderson, *Iowa* 1899–1903

Joseph G. Cannon, *Illinois* 1903–1910

Champ Clark, *Missouri* 1911–1919

Frederick H. Gillett, *Massachusetts* 1919–1925

Nicholas Longworth, *Ohio* 1925–1931

John Nance Garner, *Texas* 1931–1933

Henry T. Rainey, *Illinois* 1933–1934

Joseph W. Byrns, *Tennessee* 1935–1936

William B. Bankhead, *Alabama* 1936–1940

Sam Rayburn, *Texas* 1940–1947

Joseph W. Martin, Jr., *Massachusetts* 1947–1949

Sam Rayburn, *Texas* 1949–1953

Joseph W. Martin, Jr., *Massachusetts* 1953–1955

Sam Rayburn, *Texas* 1955–1961

John W. McCormack, *Massachusetts* 1961–1970

Carl Albert, *Oklahoma* 1970–

# Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Cabinet Members

President	Vice President	Secretary of State	Secretary of Treasury	Secretary of War
1. George Washington, Federalist 1789	John Adams, Federalist 1789	T. Jefferson 1789 E. Randolph 1794 T. Pickens 1795	Alex. Hamilton 1789 Oliver Wolcott 1785	Henry Knox 1789 T. Pickens 1795 Jas. McHenry 1796
2. John Adams, Federalist 1797	Thomas Jefferson, Dem.-Rep. 1797	T. Pickens 1797 John Marshall 1800	Oliver Wolcott 1797 Samuel Dexter 1801	Jas. McHenry 1797 John Marshall 1800 Samuel Dexter 1800 R. Griswold 1801
3. Thomas Jefferson, Dem.-Rep. 1801	Aaron Burr, Dem.-Rep. 1801 George Clinton, Dem.-Rep. 1805	James Madison 1801	Samuel Dexter 1801 Albert Gallatin 1801	H. Dearborn 1801
4. James Madison, Dem.-Rep. 1809	George Clinton, Dem.-Rep. 1809 Elbridge Gerry, Dem.-Rep. 1813	Robert Smith 1809 James Monroe 1811	Albert Gallatin 1809 G. W. Campbell 1814 A. J. Dallas 1814 W. H. Crawford 1816	Wm. Eustis 1809 J. Armstrong 1813 James Monroe 1814 W. H. Crawford 1815
5. James Monroe, Dem.-Rep. 1817	D. D. Tompkins, Dem.-Rep. 1817	J. Q. Adams 1817	W. H. Crawford 1817	Isaac Shelby 1817 George Graham 1817 J. C. Calhoun 1817
6. John Quincy Adams, Dem.-Rep. 1825	John C. Calhoun, Dem.-Rep. 1825	Henry Clay 1825	Richard Rush 1825	Jas. Barbour 1825 Peter B. Porter 1828
7. Andrew Jackson, Democratic 1829	John C. Calhoun, Democratic 1829 Martin Van Buren, Democratic 1833	M. Van Buren 1829 E. Livingston 1831 Louis McLane 1833 John Forsyth 1834	Sam. D. Ingham 1829 Louis McLane 1831 W. J. Duane 1833 Roger B. Taney 1833 Levi Woodbury 1834	John H. Eaton 1829 Lewis Cass 1831 B. F. Butler 1837
8. Martin Van Buren, Democratic 1837	Richard M. Johnson, Democratic 1837	John Forsyth 1837	Levi Woodbury 1837	Joel R. Poinsett 1837
9. William H. Harrison, Whig 1841	John Tyler, Whig 1841	Daniel Webster 1841	Thomas Ewing 1841	John Bell 1841
10. John Tyler, Whig and Democratic 1841		Daniel Webster 1841 Hugh S. Legare 1843 Abel P. Upshur 1843 John C. Calhoun 1844	Thomas Ewing 1841 Waller Forward 1841 John C. Spencer 1843 Geo. M. Bibb 1844	John Bell 1841 John McLean 1841 J. C. Spencer 1841 Jas. M. Porter 1843 Wm. Wilkins 1844

11. James K. Polk, Democratic 1845	George M. Dallas, Democratic 1845	James Buchanan 1845	Robert J. Walker 1845	William L. Marcy 1845
12. Zachary Taylor, Whig 1849	Millard Fillmore, Whig 1849	John M. Clayton 1849	Wm. M. Meredith 1849	G. W. Crawford 1849
13. Millard Fillmore, Whig 1850		Daniel Webster 1850 Edward Everett 1852	Thomas Corwin 1850	C. M. Conrad 1850
14. Franklin Pierce, Democratic 1853	William R. D. King, Democratic 1853	W. L. Marcy 1853	James Guthrie 1853	Jefferson Davis 1853
15. James Buchanan, Democratic 1857	John C. Breckinridge, Democratic 1857	Lewis Cass 1857 J. S. Black 1860	Howell Cobb 1857 Philip F. Thomas 1860 John A. Dix 1861	John B. Floyd 1857 Joseph Holt 1861
16. Abraham Lincoln, Republican 1861	Hannibal Hamlin, Republican 1861 Andrew Johnson, Unionist 1865	W. H. Seward 1861	Salmon P. Chase 1861 W. P. Fessenden 1864 Hugh McCulloch 1865	S. Cameron 1861 E. M. Stanton 1862
17. Andrew Johnson, Unionist 1865		W. H. Seward 1865	H. McCulloch 1865	E. M. Stanton 1865 U. S. Grant 1867 L. Thomas 1868 J. M. Schofield 1868
18. Ulysses S. Grant, Republican 1869	Schuyler Colfax, Republican 1869 Henry Wilson, Republican 1873	E. B. Washburne 1869 H. Fish 1869	G. S. Boutwell 1869 W. A. Richardson 1873 B. H. Bristow 1874 L. M. Morrill 1876	J. A. Rawlins 1869 W. T. Sherman 1869 W. W. Belknap 1869 A. Taft 1876 J. D. Cameron 1876
19. Rutherford B. Hayes, Republican 1877	William A. Wheeler, Republican 1877	W. M. Evarts 1877	J. Sherman 1877	G. W. McCrary 1877 A. Ramsey 1879
20. James A. Garfield, Republican 1881	Chester A. Arthur, Republican 1881	J. G. Blaine 1881	W. Windom 1881	R. T. Lincoln 1881
21. Chester A. Arthur, Republican 1881		F. T. Frelinghuysen 1881	C. J. Folger 1881 W. Q. Gresham 1884 H. McCulloch 1884	R. T. Lincoln 1881
22. Grover Cleveland, Democratic 1885	T. A. Hendricks, Democratic 1885	T. F. Bayard 1885	D. Manning 1885 C. S. Fairchild 1887	W. C. Endicott 1885
23. Benjamin Harrison, Republican 1889	Levi P. Morton, Republican 1889	J. G. Blaine 1889 J. W. Foster 1892	W. Windom 1889 C. Foster 1891	R. Proctor 1889 S. B. Elkins 1891
24. Grover Cleveland, Democratic 1893	Adlai E. Stevenson, Democratic 1893	W. Q. Gresham 1893 R. Olney 1895	J. G. Carlisle 1893	D. S. Lamont 1893
25. William McKinley, Republican 1897	Garret A. Hobart, Republican 1897 Theodore Roosevelt, Republican 1901	J. Sherman 1897 W. R. Day 1897 J. Hay 1898	L. J. Gage 1897	R. A. Alger 1897 E. Root 1899

<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Secretary of State</b>	<b>Secretary of Treasury</b>	<b>Secretary of War</b>
26. Theodore Roosevelt, Republican 1901	Chas. W. Fairbanks, Republican 1905	J. Hay 1901 E. Root 1905 R. Bacon 1909	L. J. Gage 1901 L. M. Shaw 1902 G. B. Cortelyou 1907	E. Root 1901 W. H. Taft 1904 L. E. Wright 1908
27. William H. Taft, Republican 1909	James S. Sherman, Republican 1909	P. C. Knox 1909	F. MacVeagh 1909	J. M. Dickinson 1909 H. L. Stimson 1911
28. Woodrow Wilson, Democratic 1913	Thomas R. Marshall, Democratic 1913	W. J. Bryan 1913 R. Lansing 1915 B. Colby 1920	W. G. McAdoo 1913 C. Glass 1918 D. F. Houston 1920	L. M. Garrison 1913 N. D. Baker 1916
29. Warren G. Harding, Republican 1921	Calvin Coolidge, Republican 1921	C. E. Hughes 1921	A. W. Mellon 1921	J. W. Weeks 1921
30. Calvin Coolidge, Republican 1923	Charles G. Dawes, Republican 1925	C. E. Hughes 1923 F. B. Kellogg 1925	A. W. Mellon 1923	J. W. Weeks 1923 D. F. Davis 1925
31. Herbert Hoover, Republican 1929	Charles Curtis, Republican 1929	H. L. Stimson 1929	A. W. Mellon 1929 O. L. Mills 1932	J. W. Good 1929 P. J. Hurley 1929
32. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Democratic 1933	John Nance Garner, Democratic 1933 Henry A. Wallace, Democratic 1941 Harry S. Truman, Democratic 1945	C. Hull 1933 E. R. Stettinius, Jr. 1944	W. H. Woodin 1933 H. Morgenthau, Jr. 1934	G. H. Dern 1933 H. A. Woodring 1936 H. L. Stimson 1940
33. Harry S. Truman, Democratic 1945	Alben W. Barkley, Democratic 1949	J. F. Byrnes 1945 G. C. Marshall 1947 D. G. Acheson 1949	F. M. Vinson 1945 J. W. Snyder 1946	R. H. Patterson 1945 K. C. Royall 1947 **
34. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Republican 1953	Richard M. Nixon, Republican 1953	J. F. Dulles 1953 C. A. Herter 1959	G. C. Humphrey 1953 R. B. Anderson 1957	
35. John F. Kennedy, Democratic 1961	Lyndon B. Johnson, Democratic 1961	D. Rusk 1961	C. D. Dillon 1961	
36. Lyndon B. Johnson, Democratic 1963	Hubert H. Humphrey, Democratic 1965	D. Rusk 1961	C. D. Dillon 1961 H. H. Fowler 1965	
37. Richard M. Nixon, Republican 1969	Spiro T. Agnew, Republican 1969 Gerald R. Ford, Republican 1973	W. P. Rogers 1969 H. M. Kissinger 1973	D. M. Kennedy 1969 J. B. Connally 1970 G. P. Shultz 1972	
38. Gerald R. Ford, Republican 1974				

\*\*Lost cabinet status in 1947.



Attorney General	Postmaster General	Secretary of Navy	Secretary of Interior	Secretary of Agriculture	Other Members
(1.)* E. Randolph 1789 Wm. Bradford 1794 Charles Lee 1795	Samuel Osgood 1789 Tim. Pickering 1791 Jos. Habersham 1795	Established April 30, 1798	Established March 3, 1849		
(2.) Charles Lee 1797 Theo. Parsons 1801	Jos. Habersham 1797	Benj. Stoddert 1798			
(3.) Levi Lincoln 1801 Robert Smith 1805 J. Breckenridge 1805 C. A. Rodney 1807	Jos. Habersham 1801 Gideon Granger 1801	Benj. Stoddert 1801 Robert Smith 1801 J. Crowninshield 1805			
(4.) C. A. Rodney 1809 Wm. Pinkney 1811 Richard Rush 1814	Gideon Granger 1809 R. J. Meigs, Jr. 1814	Paul Hamilton 1809 William Jones 1813 B. W. Crowninshield 1814			
(5.) Richard Rush 1817 William Wirt 1817	R. J. Meigs, Jr. 1817 John McLean 1823	B. W. Crowninshield 1817 Smith Thompson 1818 S. L. Southard 1823			
(6.) William Wirt 1825	John McLean 1825	S. L. Southard 1825			
(7.) John M. Berrien 1829 Roger B. Taney 1831 B. F. Butler 1833	Wm. T. Barry 1829** Amos Kendall 1835	John Branch 1829 Levi Woodbury 1831 Mahlon Dickerson 1834			
(8.) B. F. Butler 1837 Felix Grundy 1838 H. D. Gilpin 1840	Amos Kendall 1837 John M. Niles 1840	Mahlon Dickerson 1837 Jas. K. Paulding 1838			
(9.) J. J. Crittenden 1841	Francis Granger 1841	George E. Badger 1841			
(10.) J. J. Crittenden 1841 Hugh S. Legare 1841 John Nelson 1843	Francis Granger 1841 C. A. Wickliffe 1841	George E. Badger 1841 Abel P. Upshur 1841 David Henshaw 1843 Thomas W. Gilmer 1844 John Y. Mason 1844			
(11.) John Y. Mason 1845 Nathan Clifford 1846 Isaac Toucey 1848	Cave Johnson 1845	George Bancroft 1845 John Y. Mason 1846			
(12.) Reverdy Johnson 1849	Jacob Collamer 1849	Wm. B. Preston 1849	Thomas Ewing 1849		Secretary of Commerce and Labor
(13.) J. J. Crittenden 1850	Nathan K. Hall 1850 Sam D. Hubbard 1852	Wm. A. Graham 1850 John P. Kennedy 1852	A. H. Stuart 1850		Established Feb. 14, 1903. G. B. Cortelyou 1903 V. H. Metcalf 1904 O. S. Straus 1907 C. Nagel 1909 (Department divided, 1913)
(14.) Caleb Cushing 1853	James Campbell 1853	James C. Dobbin 1853	Robert McClelland 1853		
(15.) J. S. Black 1857 Edw. M. Stanton 1860	Aaron V. Brown 1857 Joseph Holt 1859	Isaac Toucey 1857	Jacob Thompson 1857		

Attorney General	Postmaster General	Secretary of Navy	Secretary of Interior	Secretary of Agriculture	Other Members
(16.) Edward Bates 1861 Thian J. Coffey 1863 James Speed 1864	Horatio King 1861 Montgomery Blair 1861 William Dennison 1864	Gideon Welles 1861	Caleb B. Smith 1861 John P. Usher 1863		Secretary of Commerce W. C. Redfield 1913 J. W. Alexander 1919 H. C. Hoover 1921 H. C. Hoover 1925 W. F. Whiting 1928 R. P. Lamont 1929 R. D. Chapin 1932 D. C. Roper 1933 H. L. Hopkins 1939 J. Jones 1940 H. A. Wallace 1945 W. A. Harriman 1946 C. W. Sawyer 1948 S. Weeks 1953 L. L. Strauss 1958 F. H. Mueller 1959 L. H. Hodges 1961 J. T. Connor 1965 A. B. Trowbridge 1967 M. H. Stans 1969 P. G. Peterson 1972 F. B. Dent 1973
(17.) J. Speed 1865 H. Stanbery 1866 W. M. Everts 1868	W. Dennison 1865 A. W. Randall 1866	G. Welles 1865	J. P. Usher 1865 J. Harlan 1865 O. H. Browning 1866	Cabinet status since 1869	
(18.) E. R. Hoar 1869 A. T. Ackerman 1870 G. H. Williams 1871 E. Pierpont 1875 A. Taft 1876	J. A. J. Creswell 1869 J. W. Marshall 1874 M. Jewell 1874 J. N. Tyner 1876	A. E. Borie 1869 G. M. Robeson 1869	J. D. Cox 1869 C. Delano 1870 Z. Chandler 1875		
(19.) C. Devens 1877	D. M. Key 1877 H. Maynard 1880	R. W. Thompson 1877 N. Goff, Jr. 1881	C. Schurz 1877		
(20.) W. MacVeagh 1881	T. L. James 1881	W. H. Hunt 1881	S. J. Kirkwood 1881		
(21.) B. H. Brewster 1881	T. O. Howe 1881 W. Q. Gresham 1883 F. Hutton 1884	W. E. Chandler 1881	H. M. Teller 1881		
(22.) A. H. Garland 1885	W. F. Vilas 1885 D. M. Dickinson 1888	W. C. Whitney 1885	L. Q. C. Lamar 1885 W. F. Vilas 1888	N. J. Colman 1889	
(23.) W. H. H. Miller 1889	J. W. Wadmaker 1889	B. F. Tracy 1889	J. W. Noble 1889	J. M. Rusk 1889	
(24.) R. Olney 1893 J. Harmon 1895	W. S. Bissell 1893 W. L. Wilson 1895	H. A. Herbert 1893	H. Smith 1893 D. R. Francis 1896	J. S. Morton 1893	Secretary of Labor Established March 4, 1913.
(25.) J. McKenna 1897 J. W. Griggs 1897 P. C. Knox 1901	J. A. Gary 1897 C. E. Smith 1898	J. D. Long 1897	C. N. Bliss 1897 E. A. Hitchcock 1899	J. Wilson 1897	W. B. Wilson 1913 J. J. Davis 1921 W. N. Doak 1930 F. Perkins 1933 L. B. Schwellenbach 1945 M. J. Tobin 1948 M. P. Durkin 1953 J. P. Mitchell 1953 A. J. Goldberg 1961 W. W. Wirtz 1962 G. P. Shultz 1969 J. D. Hodgson 1970 P. J. Brennan 1973
(26.) G. W. Wickham 1909	F. H. Hitchcock 1909	G. von L. Meyer 1909	E. A. Hitchcock 1901 J. R. Garfield 1907	J. Wilson 1901	Secretary of Defense Established July 26, 1947.
(27.) J. C. McReynolds 1913 T. W. Gregory 1914 A. M. Palmer 1919	A. S. Burleson 1913	J. Daniels 1913	F. K. Lane 1913 J. B. Payne 1920	D. F. Houston 1913 E. T. Meredith 1920	J. V. Forrestal 1947 L. A. Johnson 1949 G. C. Marshall 1950
(28.) H. M. Daugherty 1921	W. H. Hays 1921 H. Work 1922 H. S. New 1923	E. Denby 1921	A. B. Fall 1921 H. Work 1923	H. C. Wallace 1921	

(30.)	H. M. Daugherty 1923 H. F. Stone 1924 J. G. Sargent 1925	H. S. New 1923	E. Denby 1923 Curtis D. Wilbur 1924	H. Work 1923 R. O. West 1928	H. C. Wallace 1923 H. M. Gore 1924 W. M. Jardine 1925
(31.)	W. D. Mitchell 1929	W. F. Brown 1929	C. F. Adams 1929	R. L. Wilbur 1929	A. M. Hyde 1929
(32.)	H. S. Cummings 1933 F. Murphy 1939 R. H. Jackson 1940 F. Biddle 1941	J. A. Farley 1933 F. C. Walker 1940	C. A. Swanson 1933 C. Edison 1940 F. Knox 1940 J. V. Forrestal 1944	H. L. Ickes 1933	H. A. Wallace 1933 C. R. Wickard 1940
(33.)	T. C. Clark 1945 J. H. McGrath 1949 J. P. McGranery 1952	R. E. Hannegan 1945 J. L. Donaldson 1947	J. V. Forrestal 1945 ††	H. L. Ickes 1945 J. A. Krug 1946 O. L. Chapman 1951	C. P. Anderson 1945 C. F. Brannan 1948
(34.)	H. Brownell, Jr. 1953 W. P. Rogers 1957	A. E. Summerfield 1953		D. McKay 1953 F. Seaton 1956	E. T. Benson 1953
(35.)	R. F. Kennedy 1961	J. E. Day 1961 J. Gronovski 1963		S. L. Udall 1961	O. L. Freeman 1961
(36.)	N. de Katzenbach 1965 W. R. Clark 1967	L. F. O'Brien 1965 W. M. Watson 1968			
(37.)	J. N. Mitchell 1969 R. G. Kleindienst 1972 E. L. Richardson 1973 W. B. Sarbe 1973	W. Blount 1969 †††		W. J. Hickel 1969 R. C. B. Morton 1971	C. M. Hardin 1969 E. L. Butz 1971

\*Numbers in parentheses indicate presidential administration.

\*\*The postmaster general did not become a cabinet member until 1829.

††Lost cabinet status in 1947.

†††Discontinued in 1971.

R. A. Lovett 1951  
C. E. Wilson 1953  
N. McElroy 1957  
T. S. Gates, Jr. 1959  
R. S. McNamara 1961  
C. Clifford 1968  
M. R. Laird 1969  
E. L. Richardson 1973  
J. R. Schlesinger 1973

*Secretary of Health,  
Education, and  
Welfare*  
Established  
April 1, 1953.  
O. C. Hobby 1953  
M. B. Folsom 1955  
A. S. Flemming 1958  
A. A. Ribicoff 1961  
A. J. Celebrezze 1962  
J. W. Gardner 1965  
W. J. Cohen 1968  
R. H. Finch 1969  
E. L. Richardson 1970  
C. W. Weinberger 1973

*Secretary of Housing  
and Urban  
Development*  
Established  
September 9, 1965.  
R. C. Weaver 1966  
G. Romney 1969  
J. T. Lynn 1973

*Secretary of  
Transportation*  
Established October 15, 1966.  
A. S. Boyd 1966  
J. A. Volpe 1969  
C. S. Brinegar 1973

# Population of the United States

Division and State	1780	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870
United States	3,929,214	5,308,483	7,239,881	9,638,453	12,866,020	17,069,453	23,191,876	31,443,321	39,818,449
<b>GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS</b>									
New England	1,009,408	1,233,011	1,471,973	1,680,071	1,954,717	2,234,822	2,728,116	3,135,283	3,487,924
Maine									
New Hampshire	96,540	181,719	228,705	298,335	399,455	501,793	583,160	628,279	626,915
Vermont	141,885	183,858	214,460	244,161	269,326	284,574	317,976	326,073	318,300
Massachusetts	85,425	154,465	217,895	235,981	280,652	291,948	314,120	315,088	330,551
Rhode Island	378,787	422,845	472,040	523,287	610,408	737,699	994,514	1,231,066	1,457,351
Connecticut	68,825	69,122	76,931	83,059	97,199	106,830	147,545	174,620	217,353
New York	237,946	251,002	281,942	275,246	297,675	309,978	370,792	460,147	537,454
<b>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</b>									
New York	340,120	589,051	959,049	1,372,812	1,918,608	2,428,921	3,097,394	3,890,735	4,392,759
New Jersey	184,139	211,149	245,562	277,575	320,823	373,306	489,555	672,035	906,086
Pennsylvania	434,373	602,365	810,091	1,049,458	1,348,233	1,724,033	2,311,786	2,906,215	3,521,951
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>									
Delaware	59,096	64,273	72,674	72,749	76,748	78,085	91,532	112,216	125,015
Maryland	319,728	341,548	390,546	407,350	447,040	470,019	583,034	687,049	780,894
Dist. of Columbia		14,083	24,023	33,039	39,834	43,712	51,687	75,080	131,700
Virginia	747,610	880,200	974,600	1,065,366	1,211,405	1,239,797	1,421,661	1,596,318	1,225,163
West Virginia									442,014
North Carolina	393,751	478,103	555,500	638,829	737,987	753,419	869,039	992,622	1,071,361
South Carolina	249,073	345,591	415,115	502,741	581,185	594,398	668,507	705,708	705,606
Georgia	82,548	162,686	252,433	340,989	516,823	691,392	906,185	1,057,286	1,184,109
Florida					34,730	54,477	87,445	140,424	187,746
<b>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>									
Kentucky	73,577	220,955	406,511	564,317	687,917	779,828	982,405	1,155,694	1,321,011
Tennessee	35,691	105,602	261,727	422,823	681,904	829,210	1,002,717	1,109,901	1,258,520
Alabama				127,901	309,527	590,756	771,623	964,201	996,962
Mississippi		8,850	40,352	75,448	136,621	375,651	606,526	791,305	827,922
<b>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>									
Arkansas			1,062	14,273	30,388	97,574	209,897	435,450	494,471
Louisiana			76,556	153,407	215,739	352,411	517,762	708,002	726,915
Texas							212,592	604,215	818,579



Division and State	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970
<b>UNITED STATES</b>	50,155,783	62,947,714	75,994,575	91,972,266	105,710,620	122,775,046	131,669,275	150,697,361	179,323,175	203,211,926
<b>GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS</b>										
<b>New England</b>	4,010,529	4,700,749	5,592,017	6,552,681	7,400,909	8,166,341	8,437,290	9,314,453	10,509,367	11,841,663
Middle Atlantic	10,466,978	12,706,220	15,454,678	19,315,892	22,281,144	26,260,750	27,539,487	30,163,533	34,166,452	37,199,040
South Atlantic	7,597,197	8,857,922	10,443,490	12,194,895	13,990,272	15,793,599	17,823,151	21,182,335	25,971,732	30,871,337
East South Central	5,585,151	6,429,154	7,547,757	8,409,901	9,893,307	9,887,214	10,778,225	11,477,181	12,050,126	12,803,470
West South Central	3,334,220	4,740,983	6,532,290	8,784,534	10,242,224	12,176,830	13,064,525	14,537,572	16,951,255	19,320,560
East North Central	11,206,668	13,478,305	15,985,581	18,250,621	21,475,543	25,297,185	26,626,342	30,399,368	36,225,024	40,252,476
West North Central	6,157,443	8,932,112	10,347,423	11,637,921	12,544,249	13,296,915	13,516,990	14,061,394	15,394,115	16,319,187
Mountain	653,119	1,213,935	1,674,657	2,633,517	3,336,101	3,701,789	4,150,003	5,074,998	6,855,060	8,281,562
Pacific	1,114,578	1,888,334	2,416,692	4,192,304	5,566,871	8,194,433	9,733,262	14,486,527	20,339,105	25,453,688
<b>Noncontiguous</b>									858,939	1,068,943
<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>										
Maine	648,836	661,096	694,465	742,371	768,014	797,423	847,226	913,774	964,265	992,048
New Hampshire	346,991	376,530	411,598	430,572	443,083	465,293	491,524	533,242	606,921	731,681
Vermont	332,286	332,422	343,641	355,956	352,428	359,611	359,231	377,747	389,881	444,330
Massachusetts	1,783,085	2,238,947	2,905,346	3,366,416	3,852,358	4,249,614	4,316,721	4,690,514	5,148,578	5,689,110
Rhode Island	276,531	345,506	428,556	542,610	604,397	687,497	713,346	791,886	839,488	946,725
Connecticut	622,700	746,258	908,420	1,114,756	1,380,631	1,606,903	1,709,242	2,007,280	2,535,234	3,031,709
<b>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</b>										
New York	5,082,871	6,003,174	7,268,894	9,113,614	10,385,227	12,588,066	13,479,142	14,830,182	16,782,304	18,236,967
New Jersey	1,131,116	1,444,933	1,863,669	2,537,167	3,155,900	4,041,334	4,160,165	4,835,329	6,066,782	7,168,164
Pennsylvania	4,262,891	5,258,113	6,302,115	7,665,111	8,720,017	9,631,350	9,900,180	10,498,012	11,319,366	11,793,909
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>										
Delaware	146,608	168,493	194,735	202,322	223,003	239,380	266,505	318,085	446,292	548,104
Maryland	934,943	1,042,390	1,188,044	1,295,346	1,449,661	1,631,526	1,821,244	2,343,001	3,100,689	3,922,399
Dist. of Columbia	177,624	230,382	278,718	331,089	437,571	486,969	663,091	802,178	763,956	756,510
Virginia	1,512,365	1,635,980	1,854,184	2,061,612	2,309,187	2,421,851	2,677,773	3,318,680	3,966,949	4,646,494
West Virginia	618,457	762,794	958,800	1,221,119	1,463,701	1,729,205	1,901,974	2,005,552	1,860,421	1,744,237
North Carolina	1,399,750	1,617,949	1,893,810	2,206,287	2,559,123	3,170,276	3,571,623	4,061,929	4,558,155	5,062,059
South Carolina	995,577	1,151,149	1,340,316	1,515,400	1,683,724	1,738,765	1,899,804	2,117,027	2,392,594	2,590,516
Georgia	1,542,180	1,837,353	2,216,331	2,609,121	2,895,832	2,908,506	3,123,723	3,943,116	4,444,578	4,569,575
Florida	269,493	391,422	528,542	752,619	968,470	1,468,211	1,897,414	2,771,305	4,951,560	6,789,443
<b>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>										
Kentucky	1,648,690	1,858,635	2,147,174	2,289,905	2,416,630	2,614,589	2,845,627	2,944,806	3,038,156	3,218,706
Tennessee	1,542,359	1,767,518	2,020,616	2,184,789	2,337,885	2,616,556	2,915,841	3,291,718	3,567,089	3,923,687
Alabama	1,267,565	1,513,401	1,928,697	2,138,093	2,348,174	2,646,248	2,832,961	3,061,743	3,266,740	3,444,165
Mississippi	1,171,597	1,289,600	1,551,270	1,797,114	1,790,618	2,069,821	2,183,796	2,178,914	2,176,141	2,216,912
<b>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>										
Arkansas	802,525	1,128,211	1,311,564	1,574,449	1,752,204	1,854,482	1,949,387	1,909,511	1,786,272	1,923,285
Louisiana	939,946	1,118,568	1,361,625	1,656,388	1,798,509	2,101,593	2,363,880	2,683,516	3,257,022	3,641,306
Oklahoma	258,657	258,657	790,391	1,657,155	2,028,283	2,396,040	2,336,434	2,233,351	2,328,284	2,559,229
Texas	1,591,749	2,235,527	3,048,710	3,896,542	4,663,228	5,824,715	6,414,824	7,711,194	9,579,677	11,196,730
<b>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</b>										
Ohio	3,198,062	3,672,329	4,157,545	4,767,121	5,759,394	6,646,697	6,907,612	7,946,627	9,706,397	10,632,017
Indiana	1,976,301	2,182,404	2,516,462	2,700,876	2,930,390	3,238,593	3,427,796	3,934,224	4,662,498	5,193,669
Illinois	3,077,871	3,828,352	4,821,550	5,638,591	6,485,280	7,630,654	7,897,241	8,712,176	10,061,158	11,113,976
Michigan	1,636,937	2,093,890	2,430,982	2,810,173	3,668,412	4,842,325	5,256,106	6,371,766	7,823,194	8,875,063
Wisconsin	1,315,497	1,693,330	2,069,042	2,333,860	2,632,067	2,939,006	3,137,587	3,434,576	3,951,777	4,417,731

WEST NORTH CENTRAL										
Minnesota	780,773	1,310,283	1,751,384	2,075,708	2,387,125	2,563,953	2,792,300	2,982,483	3,413,864	3,804,971
Iowa	1,624,615	1,912,297	2,231,853	2,224,771	2,404,021	2,470,939	2,538,288	2,621,073	2,757,537	2,824,376
Missouri	2,168,380	2,679,185	3,106,665	3,293,335	3,404,055	3,629,367	3,784,684	3,954,653	4,319,813	4,676,501
North Dakota	36,909	190,983	319,146	577,056	646,872	680,845	641,935	619,636	617,761	617,761
South Dakota	96,268	348,600	401,570	583,888	636,547	692,849	642,961	652,740	680,514	665,507
Nebraska	452,402	1,062,656	1,066,300	1,192,214	1,286,372	1,377,963	1,315,834	1,325,510	1,411,330	1,483,493
Kansas	996,096	1,428,108	1,470,495	1,680,949	1,769,257	1,880,999	1,801,028	1,905,299	2,246,578	2,464,409
MOUNTAIN										
Montana	39,159	142,924	243,329	376,053	548,889	537,606	559,456	591,024	674,767	694,409
Idaho	32,610	88,548	161,772	325,594	431,866	445,032	524,873	586,637	667,191	712,567
Wyoming	20,789	62,555	92,531	145,965	194,402	225,565	250,742	290,529	330,066	332,416
Colorado	194,327	413,249	539,700	798,024	939,629	1,035,791	1,123,296	1,325,089	1,553,947	2,207,259
New Mexico	119,365	160,282	195,310	327,301	360,350	423,317	531,818	681,187	951,023	1,016,000
Arizona	40,440	88,243	122,931	204,354	334,162	435,573	489,261	749,587	1,302,161	1,770,900
Utah	143,963	210,779	276,749	373,351	449,396	507,847	550,310	686,862	890,627	1,059,273
Nevada	62,266	47,355	42,335	81,875	77,407	91,058	110,247	160,083	285,278	468,738
PACIFIC										
Washington	75,116	357,232	518,103	1,141,990	1,356,621	1,563,396	1,736,191	2,378,963	2,853,214	3,409,169
Oregon	174,768	317,704	413,536	672,765	783,389	953,796	1,069,684	1,521,341	1,768,687	2,091,385
California	864,694	1,213,398	1,485,053	2,377,549	3,426,861	5,677,251	6,907,387	10,586,223	15,717,204	19,953,134
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Alaska									226,167	300,382
Hawaii									632,772	786,561





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